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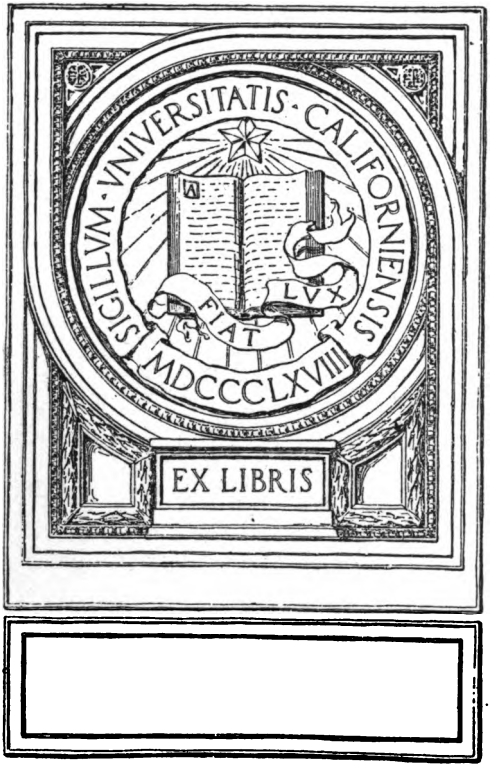

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AND THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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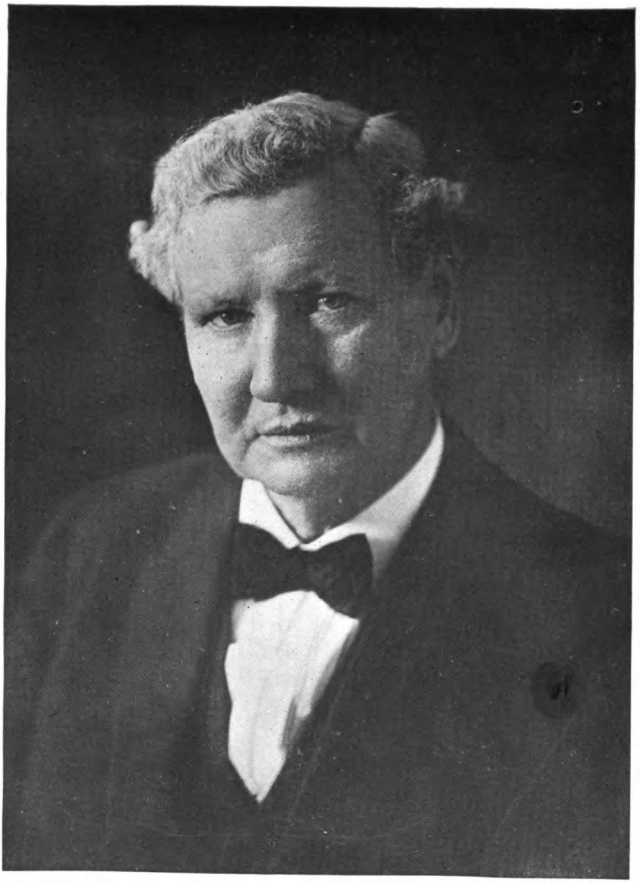

W. B. WILSON
The First Secretary of Labor

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W. B. WILSON

And the Department of Labor

BY

ROGER W. BABSON

Univ. of California

NEW YORK
BRENTANO'S
1919

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"There is one part of man in which he is able to read himself. A man may not be able to gauge his ability; he may not be able to compare his own capacity with that of his neighbors; but he can, far better than his neighbors, gauge his own motives. I know that at least my motives have been to bring happiness to mankind by placing all on a basis of equality as far as physical environments will permit of that equality."

W. B. WILSON.

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PREFACE

THERE are many persons to whom the author is much indebted for material in this story. Among them should be mentioned Secretary Wilson's friends and neighbors in Arnot and Blossburg, Pennsylvania, with whom I spent some of the most delightful hours of my life; also those loyal and efficient co-workers of the Secretary, Assistant Secretary Louis F. Post, Chief Clerk Samuel Gompers, Jr., Solicitor John W. Abercrombie, and Mr. Hugh Reid, Private Secretary to Mr. Post.

Although I refer to Mr. Hugh L. Kerwin, Assistant to Secretary Wilson, later in the book, I should also here acknowledge my indebtedness to him, together with his associates in the Secretary's office, namely, Mr. Edward S. McGraw, Private Secretary to Secretary Wilson, and Mr. Jesse C. Watts, Confidential Clerk, and Mr. Ralph H. Horner.

Portions of the Secretary's Annual Reports I have used copiously without quotation marks in the last few chapters, and for a few stories I am indebted to newspaper writers. Therefore, if any reader recognizes something of his own, may he please accept this as an acknowledgment?

Finally, let me acknowledge my indebtedness to every member of the Department of Labor who served during 1917, 1918, and 1919. Every one, among officials, heads of bureaus and services, clerks, elevator men and porters, was exceedingly kind and courteous to me in every way. They not only were a great help in this work, but joined in giving me the two happiest years of my life.

R. W. B.

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FOREWORD

By JOHN HAYS HAMMOND

AMONG the many beneficent measures signed by President Taft none was more important than the inauguration of the Department of Labor, the function of which is to improve the condition of the great wage-earning classes of the nation, and in achieving this laudable object to promote harmonious relations between employer and employee. In this way only can the social and industrial peace be established that is prerequisite to the co-operative effort of those engaged in the development of our great national industries.

It was my privilege to be able to contribute some influence in securing the creation of the Department of Labor. With others interested in the movement I believed that William B. Wilson was pre-eminently qualified to become the first Secretary of the newly created Department of Labor.

William B. Wilson had been an American wage earner from boyhood; he possessed that knowledge of and sympathy with wage earners which is an indispensable qualification for the head of the department of government whose function is to safeguard the interests of the wage earners of the country.

He had other qualifications—a judicial character of mind, a varied experience and a lifelong and intelligent interest in public affairs, and above all an unimpeachable reputation for sterling integrity.

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Having regard to the many complex problems and the conflicting interests inherent in the problems he has been called upon to solve, the verdict of history will be, I believe, that Secretary Wilson has fully justified the confidence reposed in him by those who advocated his appointment to the very important position of the first Secretary of the Department of Labor in the Government of the United States.

As a statistician and an authority on industrial problems Mr. Roger W. Babson needs no introduction, and he is specially qualified to make a study of the Department of Labor and to weave into his record of that study the life story of its first Secretary.

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W. B. WILSON

AND THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

CHAPTER I

Boyhood in Scotland

It was a cold day in February, 1868, in the little town of Haughhead, Scotland. A strike was on, and the Wilson family, like others, had been evicted from their little two-room brick house.

But unlike some of the others, the Wilsons stayed by the door of their house, protecting their scanty furniture. There sat the mother and her little boy, William, in the snow. With his left hand William clung to his mother's apron string and in his right hand he held a big knife, as they waited for the bailiff. This boy was William B. Wilson, and his eviction on that cold February day was his first actual experience with the industrial system and the conditions that it developed.

Many years later, when this day was being talked over, a friend ventured the remark:

"Mr. Secretary, I should think that you would hate all landlords forevermore. Beginning life with such an experience, how can you ever feel as kindly as you do toward those who have property?"

To this the Secretary replied:

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"Why, I never feel the slightest bitterness about that day. Of course I feel sorry when I think of all my mother suffered, but it didn't do me any harm. Although only six years old I was a good healthy kid, and would probably have been out in the snow that day anyway. No, to tell the truth, I cannot help smiling when I think how conceited I was standing there with that big knife and figuring what I would do to the bailiff when he came to arrest us. Of course it was a pretty sad time then, but it seems funny to me as I look back on it today."

* * *

Fifty years, almost to a day, had passed. This boy had become the first Secretary of Labor for the United States of America. I had an appointment with him one afternoon in his private office on the seventh floor of the big building on G Street near Seventeenth Street in Washington. There he sat by a big mahogany desk, which was piled with plans, specifications, and numerous other papers. Said I:

"You look rather tired this afternoon, Mr. Secretary."

"No," he answered, "I am not tired, but I am serious, that is all. I have just returned from the White House. The President has made me responsible for the spending of $60,000,000, on the greatest industrial housing plan America has ever even considered. It is easy enough to order houses built, but to have these built where they are needed to relieve distress and at the same time not to harm values, requires great study. It is easy enough to talk about equal opportunities, but workers can never prosper

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by the destruction of values. The confiscation of property is the confiscation of opportunities."

* * *

William Bauchop Wilson was born on the second day of April, 1862. His mother was Helen Nelson Bauchop Wilson and his father was Adam Wilson. William was the oldest child. He had three sisters, named Jean, Jessie, and Margaret, and three brothers, named Joseph, Adam, and James.

One evening in the early summer of 1918, when the Germans were almost at the gates of Paris, I sat beside Mr. Wilson at a dinner at the Powhatan Hotel, Washington. He was in one of his very quiet moods. For a long time he said nothing to me and I of course said nothing to him. Somehow or other I felt, yes, I knew, that he was thinking of his boyhood days and how good God had been to him. Some one had just sung one of his favorite Scotch songs. I noticed that the tears came to his eyes. I was right in my surmise as to his thoughts, for when called upon to speak, he began in this way:

"I have a vivid recollection of the portion of Scotland that I came from, the valleys of the Clyde in the neighborhood of Hamilton. I have had related to me by my parents the traditions of my family and of the country of my birth. I feel that every man must have a love of the country of his birth. I care not what that country may be, whether it is the beautiful hills and valleys of Scotland, the romantic mountains and glens of Switzerland, even the famous valley of the Rhine. While a man may have an intense affection for the land of his birth, he has no business

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to come to this country, live in it, enjoy its institutions, and partake of the opportunities of working out the destinies of its people, unless he has within his bosom a more intense love for the country of his adoption. I feel that intensity of love.

"There were things in connection with the institutions of the country I came from that made my parents leave that country and come here. One of my earliest recollections was that of being turned out of our home, evicted in midwinter, and finding shelter in the stables of the tollhouse near by. There was not the human liberty, there was not the human hope, there were not the human opportunities existing there that we found here when we came, and with all my love for that country, I have a greater love for this country, which gives to every man the greatest opportunities for individual development and collective enterprise that exist anywhere on the face of the globe.

"Not that our institutions are perfect; they are not; I am glad they are not. If they were perfect institutions we should have reached the highest point possible for mankind. There would be no greater heights to climb; and when you have reached the highest possible point, there is only one way in which you can move, and that is downward. So I am glad that we have not reached the highest point that it is possible for us to reach, because, after all, there is pleasure in the vigorous contest for progress and for betterment. I am glad that my days have been laid at a period and in a country where there is opportunity for exercising vigor and intelligence in moving toward higher planes with more splendid ideals.

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"Something has been said to you about this wonderful organization of which I am a part. I am going to repeat a thought to you that I have stated time and time again, until those who have heard it frequently from my lips may begin to think that the idea is threadbare. This idea is that no great institution, no great accomplishment, ever comes into existence as the result of the brilliant workings of any one mind. Our institutions are a growth. They are the result of building one thought upon another; the accepting of one idea after another; and it is because of the larger number of minds that we now have working upon the problem and in consequence the development of a greater number of ideas that we are able to build more rapidly than we were able to build before."

* * *

William was an ordinary boy. He liked to run away, he used to get cross and sulky; he fought with other boys, and, like others, dreaded Sundays. Although Mr. Wilson has always been a very religious man and identified with the Presbyterian Church in all its activities, he has never become reconciled to those Scotch Sundays, when he spent almost all day at the "wee kirk" in Blantyre. Referring once to those days, he said:

"Those Sundays were sad days. Why, we children hardly dared to speak above a whisper. We couldn't laugh or have anything to do with anyone outside the family. Everything we had to eat was prepared on Saturday and was set before us stone cold. As I think of the old church where we spent nearly all

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day Sundays, I of course realize now what that discipline did for me and my family. Young people today, however, who attend modern churches, can never understand what it meant to us to sit for hours upright on those hard benches, listening to long sermons far beyond our ken."

The little town of Blantyre, Scotland, where Mr. Wilson was born, is located on the Clyde River, between Hamilton and Glasgow. It is four miles from the big estates of the Duke of Hamilton, and eight miles from Glasgow. Like many another boy, he was not only very poor, but this poverty stood out in sharp contrast to the wealth, luxury, and wastefulness that were almost next door. The difference between the great mansions on the Duke of Hamilton's estates and the little two-room house in which he lived made a lasting impression on his mind. There were children at the great house and they used to ride by William's little home with their ponies, coachmen, and servants. He was born with only a burden of indebtedness, while they were born to great wealth; but this fact never made him the least bit jealous. He would smile at the rich children as they passed and they could not help smiling at him in return.

Like other kids, he did not care much for school. He cannot even remember the name of his first school teacher. He insists, however, that he never really heard it. Like some school teachers nowadays, this man was selected not on account of his ability, but because he needed the job. In an accident while at work he lost all the fingers of his right hand, and the boys simply called him "Fingerless Jock." This

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was sufficient for Bill as for the others. Apparently Fingerless Jock didn't teach Bill Wilson anything, for after a few weeks at the school, he was withdrawn from it and was not again sent to school until the following year.

Bill's real education began when his parents, at great personal sacrifice, sent him to St. John's Grammar School in Hamilton. The teacher in this school Mr. Wilson remembers very well. She was a tall woman with black curls hanging down her back. She reached him through the heart rather than through the brain. She won his love, and he couldn't study hard enough or do enough for her. Within a few weeks he had finished the First Reader, and the teacher wrote to his father that he was ready for the Second. Until his father could get together the little money necessary to buy this book, Bill studied from one of those at the school. So when his father finally sent the Second Reader, Bill went through it without a break in a day, and the teacher with black curls sent word to his father that he was ready for the Third Reader.

W. B. Wilson's father was a coal miner without any education. The only time that he had spent out of the mines was five years when he worked in a cotton mill to recover his health. He was working in this mill when William was born. He began to wonder how it was possible that the boy could learn so rapidly. He forgot that the boy's mother was a woman of education who prayed with her boy and helped him to do his best. To the teacher with the long black curls, and to his mother who helped him at home, William B. Wilson owes virtually his en-

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tire school education. With the possible exception of a few months' schooling after he arrived in America, the only schooling that he ever had was that one year in Scotland.

Certainly this proves that it is not hours of schooling in modern structures or extended curriculums that are needed to give a child an education. A teacher who wins the heart of the pupil, with time and strength to give to that pupil, can, with the co-operation of the home, do in one year what, under modern system, takes years to accomplish.

At the time of the eviction from the one-story, low-browed cottage (which, by the way, was one of many in a long row along a narrow street) there was a strike. The cottages belonged to the owners of the coal mine where Bill's father worked. Although the father had the means to pay the rent, the owner would not let him remain in the house, because he said it was needed for other workers who wouldn't strike. After this experience it is not surprising that Mr. Wilson has felt that corporation-owned houses are not desirable. As the only real distinction between a free man and slave is the free man's right to quit work, it is only logical that conditions should be such that an honest worker can quit if conditions are unjust. So long as the housing facilities of any community are owned or controlled by the employers there can be no real industrial freedom. Furthermore, the very fact that the employer owns the building makes the wage earner more discontented and more apt to strike than if the houses were owned by outsiders.

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Strange to say, the greatest number of strikes occur in communities where the houses are owned by the mill owners for the purpose of keeping the men from striking. The fewest strikes occur in communities where the men own their own homes and are perfectly free to strike at any time without fear of eviction. Industrial disturbances are largely psychological. Strained relations between employer and wage earner usually start from the smallest things just as do troubles within a home. Restrictions hedging about an industry to prevent men from striking are but seeds for disorder and discontent. The best antidote for industrial unrest is freedom accompanied by conditions which make for freedom.

Of the action of the mine owners in Haughhead in evicting the Wilson family during the strike of 1868, Mr. Wilson says:

"My understanding of the matter is that the action taken by the coal company in this affair was entirely within its rights under the law. But, undeniably, it happens now and then in this world that some people have too many rights while other folks possess too few. At all events, it is not unnatural that, having gone through such experiences as this, I should have started in life with an ingrained ambition to gain rights for labor that coal companies and other organizations of capital would be obliged to respect."

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CHAPTER II

His Father Emigrates to America

The Wilson family lived for quite a while in the stable under the tollhouse at Haughhead, to which they had gone when evicted from their cottage. When after some weeks the strike was settled, the father found himself facing two alternatives,—either he must return to work at Blantyre and be unfaithful to the great cause for which he and his brothers were fighting, namely, for better conditions; or else he must leave Blantyre and get work in some other place. Of course, if possible, he would find work elsewhere in Scotland, but the mine owners were banded together and none of them would hire a man who was on a strike in any other section. The father had nearly reached the end of his resources, unless he drew upon the scanty savings of years. His wife and three children must have a place to sleep and something to eat. It was a difficult problem to decide.

Many people have wondered why it is that miners stay in their work. I have been asked if the saying "Once a miner, always a miner" is true. As a rule this is true, but not from choice. The miner goes to work so young, he spends so much of his life under ground, his body becomes so accustomed to a certain temperature throughout the year, his eyes become so used to working in darkness, that it is difficult for him to take another job. William's father commenced work as a little "Caliban of the Mines" when he was

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seven years old. He was a little bit of a boy, tender and frail. He trudged away in the dark before dawn every morning with the other men and boys to go down into the bowels of the earth where the light of sun, moon, or stars is never seen. Most of his life he had worked in this darkness, where water lies stagnant beneath the feet and where there is constant danger from falling earth and tumbling timbers. Therefore, not being fitted for other work, he felt obliged to resume his previous work.

He felt, however, that this could be but temporary. The eviction had emphasized the extent to which the welfare of the miner, his happiness, and his future were at the mercy of a wholly unsympathetic corporation. At any time in the future it might deprive him and his family of bread and butter and shelter at will, and they would be without means of self-protection. Therefore, he began to consider emigrating to America. Still he did not go at once, but secured work for awhile at Ferniegair, about two miles from Haughhead.

Mr. Wilson's father was not only industrious but thrifty. He associated himself with others in forming what afterward became a great co-operative society, known as the Cadzow Society. It was named for an ancient castle in the neighborhood of Blantyre, the property of the house of Hamilton. In speaking of this society, Secretary Wilson said:

"The ruins of Cadzow Castle are still standing. I visited the place some years ago and examined them with more than ordinary interest. It is one of the oldest castles in Scotland, and intimately associated with the history of that country, particularly with

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the picturesque border warfare in which the clans of Douglas, Murray, and Wallace were for centuries engaged. Part of it is built on a lofty crag, and part is literally excavated from the mountain, being hewn out of the living rock.

"The co-operative society paid dividends, which might be drawn as they accrued or allowed to accumulate, as the member desired. My father had adopted this method of saving money, and enough dividends had accumulated to his credit to enable him to take the great step of emigration to America. It is a good illustration of the vital importance of having in this world a little money to fall back upon. The poorer the man the more necessary it is that he shall have something saved—else in an emergency he is helpless. Had my father not possessed his small savings, we could not have come to America. As it was, we had enough to enable my father to pay his own passage, and to leave us sufficient money to provide for our support until he could obtain employment on this side of the water, and send for his family to follow him."

Of course the parting from Ferniegair was sad. America is a long way from Scotland today, but in 1870 it seemed thousands of miles farther away. But the father had courage as well as principle. As had the Pilgrim Fathers years before, he set his teeth and started for that free land of America. He left Scotland in April, 1870.

On landing at New York he was sent, with others, as so much freight, to the bituminous mines of Pennsylvania, where the need for men existed at that time. The mine to which he was assigned was in the little

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town of Arnot, a place named for John Arnot, a New York business man who was president of a big coal company there. Arnot is about five miles from Blossburg and in the same county of Tioga. The nearest large city is Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

No one who has not spent some time in a mining town can appreciate the loneliness and barrenness of one of these communities. Arnot was as good as many and perhaps better than some because the workers there were mostly from England and Scotland. The worst towns are those in which the workers are from southern Europe. God forbid that any more such towns should be built. No, they are not really built; they are simply thrown together.

Arnot, in those days, consisted of three or four narrow streets with matched board huts along them. None of these huts were shingled; only strips of board were nailed over the cracks to keep out the rain, snow, and wind. Not a shack in town was painted, and then none had even vines or trees. There was a little Presbyterian church which William's father attended the first Sunday he was in Arnot, and in which he continued to worship with his family as long as they lived in that place. There were the railroad station, the company store, the company doctor, the various saloons and places of sin and crime. Everything was owned by the company, from the railroad station to the last house. Everything must be bought from the company, from the baby's nursing bottle to the aged man's coffin.

The two or three main streets led to the mines, which were about ten minutes' walk from the center of the village. The father found a humble place to board and went to work at once. The hours were from

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six o'clock in the morning to five o'clock in the evening. The pay was seventy cents for each ton of coal mined and loaded.

It was very fortunate for the people of the United States, yes, for the people of the world, that the Immigration Service of this country was placed under the Department of Labor, and that the first Secretary of Labor was W. B. Wilson. I say this because W. B. Wilson was an immigrant himself and knows from experience the trials and temptations besetting the stranger who comes to this land. Furthermore, he understands the feelings of labor leaders in their desire to restrict immigration. As almost no other high official, he has had a training and experience in both these opposed directions. He understands the feeling of the immigrant who is desirous of getting into the country and also the feeling of the labor leaders who desire to keep the immigrant out.

Immediately upon becoming Secretary of Labor, Mr. Wilson looked into the immigration situation. Most of the cases he personally handled, and was always the court of last resort that decided what should be done in each instance. He also took a great personal interest in the Bureau of Naturalization, whose work harmonized with that of the Bureau of Immigration. He immediately sought the best men available to place in charge of the Immigration and Naturalization Bureaus. He realized that these men must have hearts as well as judgment, and must have judgment as well as hearts. He first sought men who were just, but he knew that there must be more than justice. Unless justice is tempered with sympathy and understanding, it cannot accomplish the desired end.

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CHAPTER III

Billy Arrives at Castle Garden

It was a wonderful, wonderful moment. The mother of William B. Wilson, in the little town of Haughhead, Scotland, received a letter from America, inclosing a sufficient sum of money to enable her and the three children to join their father. Of course, it wasn't much money, much less for those four than one of us would spend for an ordinary journey today. But they were going to see Father. They cared not that they were going steerage; they cared not what a terrible two weeks lay ahead of them. All they could think of was America and Father. This letter arrived in the last month of summer in 1870, the same year in which the father set sail. In these few months in America he had been able to save enough to bring his wife and three children to this land of freedom.

William B. Wilson, at the age of eight, left his home in Scotland, with his little brother and sister holding tight to his hands, and trudged along behind the mother, who was carrying the baggage and all their possessions. They sailed from Glasgow on the 27th day of August, 1870. They came over in the steerage of a small ship. Only those who have traveled in the steerage know what that means, and only persons who came in those early days can appreciate what that mother and the three children went through during that trip. However, they were coming to America! They were coming to meet Father! Nothing else mattered.

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At the end of about two weeks they landed at Castle Garden, New York, with a boat load of other poor immigrants. They had no idea of the size of the State of Pennsylvania, nor of the size of America. The father had written that Arnot was near New York, while Arnot is about 250 miles from New York. It is very near compared with Chicago, Denver, and the Pacific Coast. When, however, you compare that distance with the distance from the northern tip of Scotland to the southern tip of England, which all together is only about 500 miles, we see how easy it is to mislead our immigrants.

Father had written that he would be in New York to meet them when they arrived, but the boat landed before it was expected. When Mother and the three children reached New York, no one had seen or heard of Father.

"I shall never forget," said the Secretary to me, "when we landed at Castle Garden with that boat-load of immigrants. We expected Father to meet us, but after looking everywhere, we could not find him. I shall never forget how my poor mother sat down on the wharf and cried and cried. Then one by one we all began to cry; but before long we heard some one going up and down the wharf, calling: 'Mrs. Helen N. Wilson! Mrs. Helen N. Wilson!' "

This, however, was not the father. He had sent so much money to Scotland to pay for their tickets, that he had not the money to come to New York. This was merely a letter from him. Mother quickly tore it open and in it found just enough money to take the family to Corning, New York. So they went from Castle Garden over to the Erie Railroad, crossed

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the ferry, and took a train for Corning. Meanwhile, the father was on his way from Arnot to Corning. Surely that was a happy reunion of the Wilson family at Corning. They, however, did not stay long in Corning, but kept on in the dirty little day coach till they reached the town of Arnot very late Saturday night.

I once asked the Secretary to tell me about his first view of America. I supposed he would talk about his entrance into the harbor and his experience at Castle Garden. I forgot that he was down in the hold of the ship where there are no port holes, so he could not see the harbor; and that they quickly left Castle Garden for Corning. This was his answer to my question:

"Really my first view of America was early that Sunday morning following my arrival in Arnot. We did not get to bed until after two o'clock, but boy-like, I was awake and dressed at daybreak. My first impression was one of tomatoes. There was a row on the window sill of the room in which I slept, placed there to ripen in the sun. They were the first I had ever seen. I had not had anything to eat for twenty-four hours, and I could not resist the temptation to bite into one of those tomatoes, thinking it must taste as good as it looked. I thought I was poisoned! I gave one yell and ran out doors. But after getting a good drink of water, I felt able to come in and help the family get breakfast. This was my first American breakfast, and it certainly did taste good after having nothing to eat for so long. But we were awfully poor. Mother had spent all the money for the passage. Father had sent enough to us at

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Castle Garden only to pay our railroad fares. So there was nothing to do but go without eating."

For a while Father and Mother Wilson and the three children lived in the house where the father had boarded. Later, however, the company built a little shack for them. In this house they spent their lives. The house is still standing. Additions have been made to it, so that it is much larger. A little piazza has been built on the side, where the lad spent many a happy moment. Vines now cover the walls, which are still simply of matched boards, with no shingles or clapboards.

Within a few days the boy William was put into the public school at Arnot. As the father could barely read, it was his great ambition to give William an education. It was a very happy day for William when he entered this little school at Arnot. He studied hard and made the best of every moment, "for America's sake," he would say. This reminds me of the meaning of Mr. Wilson's middle name. He was named for his mother's father, Bauchop, the Celtic for two words—Bauch, meaning little, and Op, signifying son. It was peculiarly fitting as applied to the little son of Helen Nelson Bauchop Wilson and Adam Black Wilson, because William Bauchop Wilson was the inseparable companion of his father, not only when they sat together in the mines, but when they were together after supper, and by the light of the lamp the small boy read aloud about the things his father wanted to know.

Of course, the arrival of the mother and children increased greatly the father's burdens. It cost more then to live in America than in Scotland, as it does

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today. Although wages were higher in this country, the cost of living was likewise higher. The father didn't realize this until the wife and children came. But he gritted his teeth and made his pick go faster and worked longer hours in the damp, dark mines, wheezing now from asthma, "the miner's choke," getting wet from the leaking water, breathing into his lungs the fine particles of dust which rise in great clouds. Words fail to describe the working conditions of the mines of those days.

It was always a disappointment to the Secretary that he had not been able to have immigrants examined in their own countries before sailing. One of the greatest tragedies of modern times is that of families selling all their possessions and buying tickets for America, only to be forbidden to land and turned back upon their arrival on our shores. For years the Secretary of Labor tried to remedy this by urging Congress to provide that this examination be made in the home countries. In talking this over with me one day, Mr. Wilson said:

"I would rather see immigration greatly restricted than to have many more of these tragedies occur. It is not a tragedy for a man not to be able to emigrate to America, however much of a disappointment it may be. To have him sell all and emigrate and then be thrown back is a tragedy."

Before the war Secretary Wilson sent to Europe an expert investigator, Mr. W. W. Husband, to look into immigration conditions in Germany, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Greece, Italy, and the Balkan Peninsula. The Secretary had one main object in sending Mr. Husband, to find out the conditions under which

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these emigrants left their countries, in order, if possible to decide on some means to prevent their starting when for any reason they would be likely to be sent back. When asked what his expert had learned from his investigations, Secretary Wilson answered:

"He found that a very large number of aliens are indirectly induced to emigrate to the United States. European countries have laws regulating the emigration of their inhabitants and take upon themselves a measure of supervision over their water transportation lines. No country wants its people to violate its laws. While open efforts to promote immigration are prohibited, thousands of aliens at village markets and fairs are secretly advised to come to America by steamship agents, who get commissions on the tickets they sell.

"Thus persons who will be turned back at our ports on their arrival here purchase tickets under solicitation, not knowing either the law or the facts bearing on the situation. They are poor, often miserably so, but by selling their few personal belongings they get sufficient money with which to pay their ocean passage. When they leave their old homes they have nothing but the clothing they wear and the little bundles they carry in their hands. But they are filled with hope and feel that their luck will turn once they are in the United States.

"Penniless, they arrive in New York, only to find that they must return to the village they have left. Their homes have been broken up. Their property, turned into money and spent, is gone. It is true the steamships that brought them over are required to take them back free of charge, but they are ruined, none the less.

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"It seemed to me, as I became familiar with the immigrant problem, that something should be done to stop the coming of these aliens who, for one reason or another in our laws, are prevented from entering the country. So I asked Mr. Husband to visit Europe, talk with public officials, with steamship managers, and with priests, rabbis, and ministers. Our purpose was to show just what classes of aliens are prohibited from coming into the United States, and to spread the information in small villages and rural districts and in the people's homes.

"Wherever Mr. Husband went he was well received. Public officers, transportation companies, and churches sympathized with what we are trying to accomplish, and promised their co-operation. They saw that a cripple or beggar, or a diseased person, should remain in the village where he belongs, and that if he were shipped to America he would surely be sent back to his own home in course of time. But before Mr. Husband's report could be put into type Europe went to war. International relations are in so delicate a balance now that we have decided to hold the report back for the present.

"A plain statement of the immigration laws of the United States has been sent, however, to all our diplomatic and consular officers in Europe. Full descriptions are given of those persons who are debarred by cause from coming into the United States. Publicity regarding these laws ought to prevent persons returning to their own countries and not being able to tell why they were deported. During the war many weaklings, derelicts, and criminals, no doubt, tried to get into this country. And now that the war is

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over great numbers of broken men and women will want to forget their sorrows and try to rebuild themselves in free America.

"Of course, immigration fell off at once at the outbreak of the European War. From August 1 to October 1, 1913, immigrants to the number of 310,452 entered the United States. During the same period in 1914 the number was only 89,789. What effect the war will have on immigration in the long run is conjectural. There are two theories. It is argued that the men and women of Europe, worn out, stricken with poverty, fearful of other wars, will come in immense numbers to the United States. On the other hand, it is maintained that ruined Europe will have to be rebuilt and that work at good wages will be abundant for all able-bodied men."

On being asked a question regarding the restriction of immigration, Secretary Wilson answered:

"In my opinion, no more aliens should come into the country during a given year than can be properly assimilated,—that is, absorbed so completely as not to affect our institutions injuriously. In almost every case the alien landing at our ports is poor. It is necessary that he should have work at once. There are no more free Government lands on which he may settle. If he wants land, he must buy it. He has no money, however, with which to obtain land, no money for tools and livestock, and nothing on which to live until he can grow a crop. So he remains where he is or goes to a nearby mining or manufacturing district, and perhaps adds another unit to the oversupply in that labor market.

"Now an excess of labor means, of course, that

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under the pressure of competition wages fall or that the days of work are reduced, and, logically, that the standard of living is lowered. When such things happen a community is not in a sound economic condition. A million aliens a year are not too many, possibly, for a country so large and generally so prosperous as the United States, provided that the million is properly distributed."

There are three ways under discussion by which the stream of immigration can be cut down. An educational test is being urged by many public men. Aliens, these men argue, should be able to read and write their own language. The reply is made in opposition to this suggestion that the literacy test would exclude many young and healthy aliens, and admit agitators and persons living principally by their ingenuity.

Another proposal is to base all future immigration on the number of aliens now in the United States from each country. If that idea became a law, there would be a large decrease in the number or immigrants admitted from Greece, Italy, and Austria-Hungary, but there would be no appreciable effect upon immigration from Russia, and no effect whatever upon immigration from Great Britain, France, and Germany, or the countries of northern Europe.

A third plan for reducing immigration is to admit immigrants to eastern ports of the country in proportion to the population of the countries from which they come, taking into account at the same time the condition of business in the United States. Under this scheme Russia would fare best, and Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, Italy, and England would follow in order as given.

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Foreign language societies, Hebrew societies, those political economists who maintain that men should move without hindrance wherever they choose, and certain large corporations which view with composure an over-supplied labor market, are antagonistic to all attempts further to limit the human tide that is sweeping in upon the shores of the United States.

Organized labor, patriotic societies, and some organizations of farmers are urging additional restrictive legislation. The literacy test is approved by organized labor and the patriotic associations. Fifty-six per cent. of the immigrants arriving from southern Italy are illiterate. The education laws of Italy are the same north and south. There are striking dissimilarities, however, between the people of the two regions.

One day I said to Secretary Wilson:

"Thousands of men working in this country returned to Europe at the call of their countries and are now engaged in war. Should aliens who come here to find work be required to take out papers of naturalization?"

"I do not think so," Secretary Wilson answered. "The alien who becomes a citizen or takes steps to become a citizen should do so freely and not under any sort of compulsion. He should want to be an American, should believe in our institutions, and love liberty. Such a man will make a good citizen and his children will be patriotic Americans. It would be no gain to the country were he forced to accept citizenship; on the contrary, it would be an injury.

"Besides, if entrance to the United States were conditional on citizenship, nothing could prevent an alien

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from applying for first papers, thus signifying his intention, and then refusing later to complete the required process. Fraud would be encouraged, and we should be making a mockery, as I see it, of a sacred privilege."

In discussing this question of the restriction of immigration, Secretary Wilson is very sympathetic with the immigrant, but he says:

"We must not think simply of the man who wants to enter our country; but we must also think of those who have already come in. They need protection as much as the immigrant needs sympathy. When we let them into a country, we assume a responsibility as well as a burden. We owe it to them not to take in too many or more than the nation can well assimilate.

"If men were mere machines, then we could afford to take in anybody who would produce more than he would consume. Under such conditions we should need simply to balance the producing and consuming qualities of our immigrants. But immigrants are not machines. Not only have they souls which we must consider, but they bring with them other things besides the power to produce and consume. Immigrants can bring disease, not only of the body but also of the mind. A machine will consume raw material and turn out the finished product. We know its limitations as well as its capacity. An immigrant, however, does much more than consume and produce. Every immigrant has a certain moral influence in this country, either for good or for evil. Moreover, he has this influence with a foreign group, a group which it is difficult for the rest of us to reach."

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CHAPTER IV

His Boyhood Ends — Joining the Union.

A slight little fellow, not yet in his teens,
His arms to his elbows tucked down in his jeans;
No cares for the present, no thoughts of the past,
No plans for the future, no troubles that last;
No bird as it sings o'er its nest in the tree
Its ode to the morning more happy than he,
His loud ringing whistle, clear, piercing, and shrill,
Re-echoes the joys of his heart o'er the hill—
He is starting in life as a miner.

This description of a happy little lad is taken from one of Mr. Wilson's own poems. We can well imagine it pictures his own boyhood. One need only look at the Secretary's face to realize that he must always have been cheery, even when his later life brought him many cares and responsibilities.

After the family was safely landed at Arnot, and settled in a home, naturally the next thing was to start the children in school. Reuben Howland, an old-time schoolmaster, was in charge of the public school, and what little early education Billy had was attained in this school, supplemented with tutoring by this Mr. Howland. The boy had had quite a vacation since the days with the tall teacher with the black curls in Scotland, when he plunged through reader after reader at breakneck speed. He probably, like other children, had enjoyed the activity and changes of the journey to the new home, in spite of its discomforts, but no doubt he was now glad to begin to study again.

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The happy little fellow trudged along to school, day after day, care-free and full of play. His eagerness to learn would surely make him excel in his lessons, and his natural boylike exuberance would cause him to enter enthusiastically into the sports of the playground. We may be sure that Billy was popular; the same traits that have won him the love and support of his townspeople and fellow workers everywhere, were present in the small boy's disposition. We can imagine him a leader among the boys, as he afterward became prominent in settling difficulties among workers. This was the one period of Bill's life when he was free from responsibility and bent on getting the most out of life for himself.

Yet, even at this time, life was not all fun for Bill. He tells of the first money he ever earned, saying: "The first real money I ever earned was about two dollars, collected from the neighbors for carrying water, running errands, and being general messenger and delivery boy for the community."

This must have been before he left school, and must have been gathered slowly little by little, for other people in that community were poor, too, and we may be sure they could not afford to pay much for the services that Bill rendered. Now, what did the boy do with this hard-earned two dollars? Did he hand it over to his mother to help in buying necessary clothing or supplies? Did he put it aside for future need? Or did he invest it so that it would bring him some return later? The boy's thirst for knowledge decided. His parents wisely let him use the money as he wished. He says:

"With that large sum I purchased a second-hand

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edition of *Chambers's Information for the People,* and, as I recall the months that followed, I must have read everything about every subject in those volumes to my father."

He did invest it so that it would bring him some return later. With the boy's wonderfully retentive memory, those stores of miscellaneous knowledge have proved a veritable mine of useful information. And this was the boy's choice of a purchase when not nine years old! No wonder his parents longed to educate him in the hope that he would follow a literary career and become famous in the world of literature.

Meanwhile, his father was working far beyond his strength, and became ill with lumbago. After several attacks he was left in such a condition that it was agony to stoop. But he must go on with his work in the mines, for he had been trained to nothing else and the family must be supported. What should they do? No doubt the parents talked it over many nights after the children were in bed, knowing all the time that there was but one thing to do, but dreading to shatter all their dreams for the future of their talented son.

Reluctantly they at last came to the point where they told William he must leave school and help his father. Father could sit on the floor of the mine, his powerful arms could still undercut, getting out the coal for some one else to pile on the cars. That some one else, then, was to be little William, only nine years old. Yes, yes, that boy who was so happy at his first year in school was torn away from his life's hope and put to work in the damp, dark mines at nine years of age.

Bravely the boy shouldered the burden, his dis-

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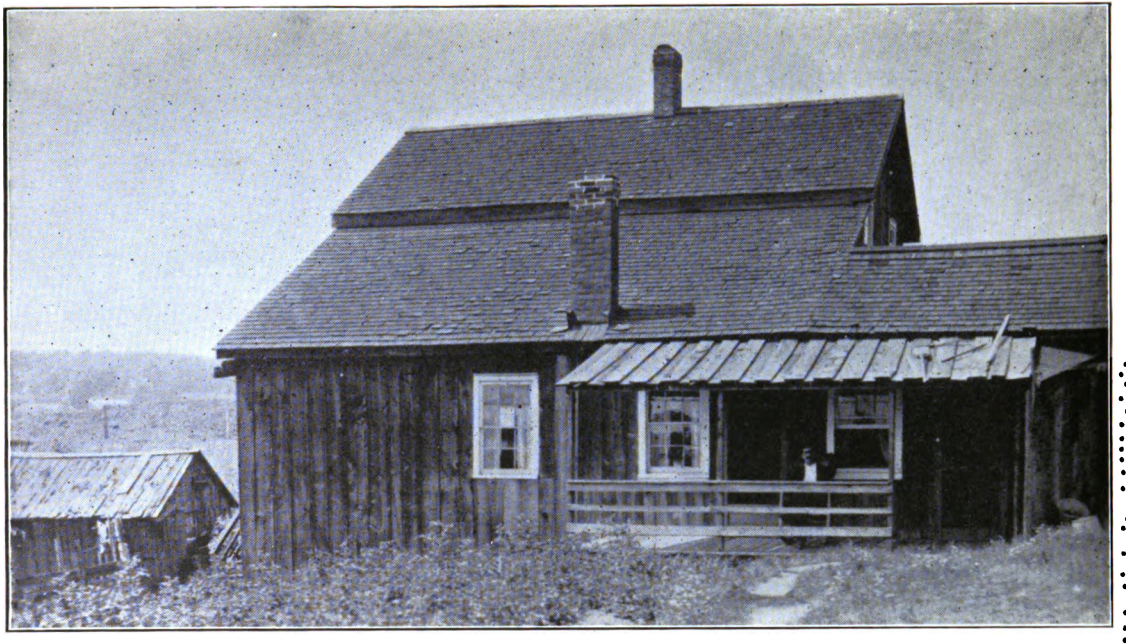

This is the house in which W. B. Wilson spent most of his life after marriage. His brother-in-law is on the piazza

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appointment at having to interrupt his education tempered by the thought that he was a helper in the family and indispensable to its support. But think of it! Think of your own nine-year-old lad, or any other boy of that age of your acquaintance, and how you would like to have him starting out before daylight, trudging along with rough men and boys to the mouth of the mine, there to be put into a little car and carried into the depths of the earth. With only the little light on his cap to guide him, he must find his way to the spot assigned to him.

Here, in the foul air, amid the deafening roar of machinery, the little boy, who should have been at play with marbles in the sunshine or in a well-aired schoolroom with the books his intellectual soul craved, was condemned to work for our comfort ten hours a day. Because Father could not do it, he must all day stoop and lift the pieces of coal to the little cars which came in an unceasing procession, relentlessly urging the boy to greater efforts.

Now and then one of the children would get caught in the machinery and be frightfully mangled, or would slip into the chute and be smothered to death. Many children are killed in this way. All are old men before their time. It was during the first year of William's work in the mine that he was buried under the rock in the mine. In talking to the Secretary of Labor one day, some one asked:

"Do you remember anything particularly vivid or dramatic about those days when you were a boy working in the mine?"

"Let me think," said the Secretary, in his calm, dispassionate voice. "Of course, there are certain

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things that are always vivid—I don't know whether you would call them dramatic or not. It was when I was just nine years old I was buried under the rock in the mines."

"When you were working there beside your father?" the questioner gasped.

"Yes. There was a ledge of rock." (Secretary Wilson could not pronounce rock or prop without betraying his Scotch burr.) "This ledge of rock had been pronounced unsafe. So, as I had to shovel beneath it, my father fixed a prop under the ledge to protect me. In some way or other the prop gave way, a bit of rock fell down, and I was caught. There was quite a shower of rock, but it happened that the prop fell parallel with the rock, and I lay in between the two till they dug me out."

"And your father calling, calling 'Wullie! Wullie!'?"

"Oh, yes," answered the Secretary of Labor. "But I was not killed."

What must have been the father's feelings while waiting and calling for help to rescue his boy!

At night, after sundown, weary and coal begrimed, the little lad came up with the others and dragged himself home to one of a row of flimsy cottages that belonged to the company, with one idea in his mind, to get something to eat before tumbling into bed. For the first few months this was the routine, working and sleeping; almost too tired to take even a few mouthfuls of the scanty supper of dry bread and porridge which was all they could afford. Even this, "his own childish energy had pitifully helped to wrest from the vast storehouses of plenty hoarded

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so inhumanly by capital." What a dismal life for a happy lad of nine, who loved to run about and play in the sunshine, and who had as much right to the pleasure of a care-free childhood as have your own boys.

After a few months, however, though his growing body still cried out for food and sleep, he became, in a measure, accustomed to the hard work. A strong constitution, inherited from rugged Scotch ancestors, hardened with the steady toil. His eagerness for intellectual pursuits asserted itself and he found he could sit up after supper and read awhile. Then his evenings were spent in reading to his father and studying as he might alone.

About this time the community arranged for a night school. Each pupil had to pay a dollar a month to the principal, and for a time, at a sacrifice of much needed food and rest, William was able to attend. Here he says he picked up a little on his school studies. But the reading with his father seemed to be the main part of his education. Father could not read very well and his wife had always been in the habit of reading to him. As soon as William was able to take this upon himself, father and son spent their evenings together, studying and reading history, philosophy, and economics, the boy helped by the father's naturally fine mind and wonderful ability to grasp deep subjects. The father was very fond of argument and debate, and his retentive memory enabled him to enter the lists with those better educated than himself in school learning. William also had a wonderful memory, and could always give authority and reference to prove his father's statements.

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For seven years he worked with his father in the mine, at first only loading. Then his father taught him to aid in drilling, and finally he learned all kinds of mining. He continued mining coal for twenty-seven years, and after that he mined coal in the winter and worked on the farm in the summer. He says he was a strong, husky lad—he must have been to endure such toil—and could load from six to seven tons of coal a day into the little cars that ran in and out of the mines. Just what they had to eat, whether it was little or much, depended on what was loaded into those cars during the week.

When he was eleven years old he became a half member of the Mine Workers' Union. His life has been devoted to the interests of the laboring man. His influence has been all the greater because his knowledge of manual labor has not been theoretical but practical. He sympathized with the working man as few could, and this sympathy was freely bestowed on those who came in contact with him. Yet he was not in the least bitter toward the employer. His feeling toward such was generous.

Certainly these were hard days for the little fellow, thus robbed of childhood's right to play and deprived of the chance to attend school. Yet perhaps this early hardship was his making. He was forced to search for opportunities to better his condition, and his mind inevitably turned toward certain ideals.

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CHAPTER V

The Cobbler's Shop

A favorite gathering place for the miners of Arnot in the evenings was the cobbler's shop of a man by the name of Hugh Kerwin. As many of the workers in the mines of Arnot were of Scotch, English, or Irish descent, they were of a higher grade intellectually than those of many mining towns of Pennsylvania. This Mr. Kerwin was an omnivorous reader. He and his associates had social and political theories of their own. He took newspapers and even subscribed for the Congressional Record.

When these sturdy miners came together, they had lively arguments over national and international affairs, and debated questions of philosophy, theology, and economics. The problems connected with the labor world were also discussed, and no doubt many plans for bettering the condition of workers were threshed out in the little back room of Mr. Kerwin's shop, where they met. There was located the Reading Room and library, the only one really worth the name in the village.

One night young William went to one of these meetings with his father, and heard the men debating. This opened a new world to him. It was the first time he had heard such talk outside his home. From that moment he eagerly looked forward each day to the time when he might go to the little back shop and hear these wonderful discussions. He would sit and

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listen entranced and would remember most of the arguments.

The shoemaker noticed the shy, interested lad, with his keen blue eyes and his bright intellectual face, and lent him books to read. The boy devoured these hungrily, sitting up far into the nights to finish them, and using the few spare moments in the mine to pore over them by the dim light of the miner's lamp on his cap. The shoemaker was curious to know whether the boy really understood such books and got anything out of them. So he asked the lad some questions and found that he really seemed to grasp the meaning of those big ideas, and remembered and thought about them. As one has said: "His thirsty mind absorbed facts and catalogued them naturally."

After a while he had read and digested all the books in Mr. Kerwin's library, and still was not satisfied. Other mine boys, following his lead, had also become interested. To hold this interest more books were needed. So, under the wise direction of Mr. Kerwin, a library society was formed, dues were collected (out of the slender pittance these boys earned), and new books were purchased. William was made librarian and to him was intrusted the pleasant task, no doubt with the advice of Mr. Kerwin, of selecting the new books.

Among the books that the boy read to his father and by himself, in these years before he entered his teens, were the *Chambers's Information* before mentioned, Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations,* Drummond's *Natural Law in the Spiritual World, Science and the Bible,* and, of course, as his family were strict Presbyterians, the Bible itself. His father

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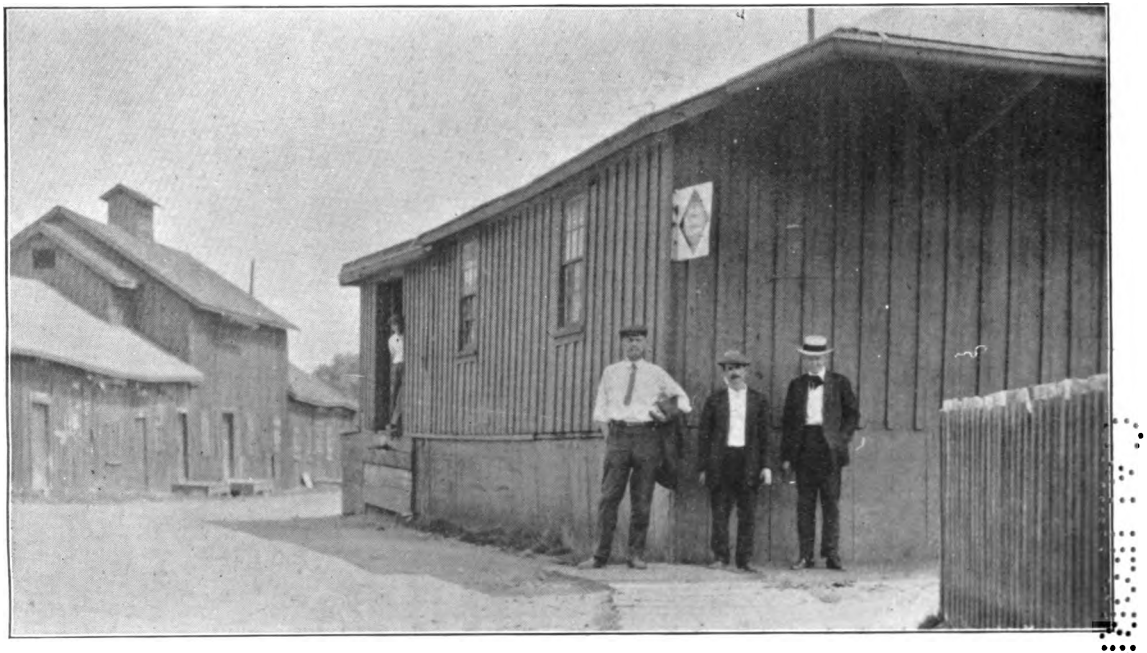

This is the Cobbler's Shop referred to. It has since been made over into a freight house. The man at the extreme right is Mr. Hugh L. Kerwin, son of the "Cobbler"

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loved to debate, but gloried in having his facts verified by the best authorities. A controversy involving theology, politics, or philosophy was to him the very breath of his nostrils. When he met with a neighbor, friend, or any one who was as opinionated as himself, an argument was sure to follow, and he liked to have his son at hand to prove his points.

"Wullie," he would say, "what was it we read about that last night?"

And "Wullie" was always ready with statistics and facts. Mr. Wilson feels that this was good literary training and had a stimulating effect upon his mind. His naturally good memory was strengthened by his father's dependence on him to verify the statements and quotations used by him in his arguments. It is doubtless true that his knowledge of these subjects was a matter of memory, with only a limited rational understanding of them. But even so, is it not remarkable that a child of ten or twelve could so file these deep matters in his mind as to be able to draw upon them at will upon the request of his father?

Later, as his mental faculties developed to a greater extent, he continued his reading along economic lines and became a serious student of economic and labor conditions. That study he has kept through his life and has combined it with a general knowledge of literature, so that today he would pass in any gathering of cultured people as a man of liberal education. With his other reading he also became familiar with the works of Scott and Dickens, and with the poets Burns, Shelley, Campbell, Cowper, Wordsworth, and Tennyson. He calls Burns his favorite poet, and he himself has a poetic gift, as is evidenced by his volume

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of poems called "Memories." He does not claim to have much knowledge of modern novels, as he has had little time to read them, being so occupied in selecting for his library the books that he required for his studies,—books of history, poetry, and economics.

At the age of fourteen William organized a debating society among the boys, where they no doubt discussed and decided the great questions of the day with as much authority and solemnity as their elders. This initiation into the cobbler's shop lyceum was the real start of W. B. Wilson's education. He never forgot or ceased to be grateful to this teacher shoemaker. Mr. Kerwin has been dead for many years, but Mr. Wilson's first official act after taking the oath of office as Secretary of Labor in 1912 was to appoint as his private secretary the son of the shoemaker, Hugh L. Kerwin, who had also served as his secretary in the Sixty-second Congress, during which Mr. Wilson was chairman of the Committee on Labor, House of Representatives.

One has only to hear Secretary Wilson make a speech on any subject to realize that his early training in debate, though irregular, has served him well. He makes his points with logical precision and delivers them with telling and convincing force. His father was considerably worried about his talented son's loss of an opportunity for a school education by having to go to work in the mines so young; but nobly the boy overcame this handicap. He modestly says of himself:

"If I have managed to get on in the world to any extent, it affords the best possible evidence that this is a country in which opportunity lies in every man's path."

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The saying is often quoted: "The world owes every man a living." Secretary Wilson put it thus: "The world owes every man the *opportunity* to make a living."

I owe a great deal to Mr. Wilson for helping me to understand human nature. As Director General of the Information and Education Service of the Department of Labor, it was my duty to prepare posters, bulletins, and other publicity, which went to the mills, factories, and shipyards, for the purpose of increasing production. Whenever it was possible, I took the copy to Secretary Wilson to criticise. It was a long time before I was able to get the correct point of view. For instance, the Secretary insisted that we should use the word "we" instead of the word "you," never saying "You should produce more," but "We should produce more." He insisted that it is very poor psychology to scold, but that rather we should enthuse.

"There is always something good we can find," he would say, "and why not find that good thing and praise, rather than hunt for the opposite and criticise it? We can make headway much faster by enthusing over the good than by criticising the bad."

The Secretary's psychology applied not only to words but also to pictures. At one time we had an artist painting industrial pictures for use in colored posters. There was one picture of a workingman and a soldier shaking hands, which was selected by the heads of the different bureaus as the best of the lot. It truly was a most appealing picture. When the Secretary saw it, he at once shook his head and said:

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"I don't like those overalls."

"Why," I asked, "don't workmen like to be shown in overalls?"

"Yes," replied the Secretary, "workmen like to be shown in overalls, but the overalls must be whole, not torn. Working people don't like to be seen in rags any more than the rest of us. Besides, holes and torn places are a reflection on the women folks at home."

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CHAPTER VI

What a Mine Is Like

An underground forest becomes an underground city—that is the evolution of a coal mine. For city it certainly is, with streets and passages—often on different levels—for the conveying of the cars of coal and supplies, and the journeying of the miners to their respective places. In an old pit near Newcastle, England, there are no less than fifty miles of passages, and our Pennsylvania mines can excel this. To think that many, perhaps most, of these excavated roads are the result of hand labor, stroke on stroke!

In digging out the coal, or undercutting, as the first process is called, the miner must sit, crouch, or even lie in an uncomfortable position for hours, wielding his pick to get out the coal. Machines have been invented for cutting coal when found under certain conditions,—one machine originated in America in 1887, which is more widely used here than in England, where a different type is used. But even where machines are employed the beginning must usually be made by hand, and in many places it is not feasible to use the machines. Certainly the invention of a machine in 1887 was of no use to young William and his father in their arduous work; in fact, even today no machines are used in the Arnot mines. Whatever the work or the manner in which the mining is done, the fact remains that any employment that keeps the worker underground is disagreeable, dangerous, and a menace to the health.

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The mine that little William Wilson worked in was not better or worse than others of its kind. All mines are full of dangers, and fifty years ago there were not many of the safety inventions that have since been in use. Dangerous gases are confined underground, and digging for coal frees them. Many of these gases are intensely inflammable, light is necessary for the miner to carry on his work, hence the danger of explosions is great. One of the greatest inventions connected with mining is that of the safety lamp, invented in 1815 by Sir Humphrey Davy. With the improvements that have since been made in such lamps, it is possible for the miners, if careful, to be comparatively safe, so far as explosions are concerned. The slightest breath of an open light upon the dangerous gases is sufficient to cause them to explode, and then partitions are burned away, smoke and fire roll through the passages, pushing their way up the shaft and telling the workers above that their fellows are being suffocated or burned alive. At such times the men show their heroism, many cases of most extraordinary sacrifice of life to save others being told in connection with mine accidents.

There is always the danger of flood. An underground stream or spring may be suddenly tapped and the water will pour through the passages, catching unawares the hapless workmen and carrying them to their death. Many mines have to keep pumps going all the time. Even when the miner starts in on his day's work, he puts himself in peril, for in going down the shaft in the cage he trusts himself to the chains and ropes which lower the cage, and they may give way and precipitate him to the floor of the mine.

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Another danger is that which little William experienced when a prop gave way and he was hurled under the debris. Rules are very strict in most mines regarding the placing of props to hold up the ceiling of the mine, but men working constantly in the presence of danger become accustomed to it and grow careless of precautions and often do not observe the rules. Sometimes, indeed, such accidents are absolutely unpreventable.

Necessarily, the air in a mine must be close, foul, and poisonous, even though not directly inflammable. The pumping of fresh air into mines and the extraction of the bad air, its foulness increased by the breath and exhalations of the perspiring workers, is a serious problem, and many and various have been the attempts at its solution. Usually systems are used with two shafts or wells, called respectively the upcast and the downcast. If there is a shaft of any kind at each end of a mine, with connecting passages, a rough kind of ventilation or circulation will necessarily result, but this will not affect the side passages and chambers not directly on this main avenue.

One plan which seems to give universal satisfaction is to have a specially constructed chamber at the bottom of the upcast in which is an immense furnace in which a fire is kept constantly burning. The column of air above this furnace becomes rarefied and ascends, while the cooler air below rushes in and spreads itself in all directions to take the place of the bad air. Ventilation fans for changing the air have also been brought to a great degree of perfection. But by any method, a strong current of air would naturally take the shortest and most direct course from entrance to

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exit, not penetrating the many offshoots from the main passage. Therefore, there must be a system of barriers and tight closing doors in such a way that the fresh air must traverse all the windings and penetrate every part of the mine. In order that this current may be guided along the passages where it is intended it should go, many boys are employed to open the door to all comers and carefully close them after all have passed through. These boys are called trappers. There they sit, in semi-darkness, with nothing to occupy them except when the welcome call of a wagoner or other workman gives them a moment's diversion and companionship. I well remember passing through these doors in the Arnot mine in which William worked.

Dry coal dust is liable to explosive action. Frequent watering is necessary to prevent such explosion. Yet the more perfect the system of ventilation, the more will all the moisture be dried up, and the more dangerously inflammable will this coal dust become. In any case, the miners have to breathe this dust as it rises and their lungs are filled with it, so that it adds to the danger of the pulmonary trouble which is so common among this class of workers.

The fact remains, however, that, in spite of all the precautions that have been and may be taken, including the introduction of the most scientific and improved appliances for the safety of the miner, his task, working perhaps thousands of feet below ground, continues to be a frightfully hard and dangerous one. Although the most terrible death tolls are usually due to explosions, which happen only occasionally on a large scale, many more workers are receiving fatal in-

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juries through the falling roofs and sides of seams in the mines. It is said that not a single day passes throughout the year without seeing the death of at least one miner, and that the average number of deaths every day of every year is thirty and upward.

More miners are employed in American mines than are needed for getting out the necessary quantity. Therefore some must be laid off at times. It is said that miners work, on an average, only two hundred and twelve days in the year. However fortunate this may be for their health, it is readily seen that they must be idle the remainder of the time. Mining communities are usually in a remote section where it is difficult for a miner to obtain other work to do when not occupied in the mine, even if he were fitted to do anything else. This enforced idleness, without pay, of course brings increased suffering to himself and his family. The miner is reckoned on a par with the railroad employee as regards danger, and next to the structural iron worker, who is listed in the extra hazardous callings.

The life of the miner was summed up by the late President John Mitchell of the United Mine Workers (the body of which Mr. Wilson was Secretary and Treasurer) in these words:

"First, the boy of eight or ten is sent to the breaker to pick the slate and other impurities from the coal which has been brought up from the mine; from there he is promoted and becomes a door boy, working in the mine; as he grows older and stronger he is advanced to the position and pay of a laborer; there he gains the experience which secures him a place as miner's helper; and as he acquires skill and strength

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he becomes a full-fledged miner. If he is fortunate enough to escape the falls of rock and coal he may retain his position as a miner for a number of years; but as age creeps on and he is attacked by some of the many diseases incident to work in the mines, he makes way for those younger and more vigorous following him up the ladder whose summit he has reached. He then starts on the descent, going back to become a miner's helper, then a mine laborer, now door-boy; and when old and decrepit, he finally returns to the breaker where he started as a child, earning the same wages as are received by the little urchins working at his side."

A pitiful life story indeed, and one which might have been that of Mr. Wilson, had it not been for his indomitable will, his unusual mental gifts, and his great love and sympathy for his fellow workers coupled with his desire to help them.

Frequent agitation regarding the making of Child Labor Laws has not materially affected the child workers in the mines. Nominally, no boy under the age of twelve and no woman or girl of any age shall be employed or permitted to be in the workings of any bituminous coal mine for the purpose of employment. Great numbers of such children are, however, employed in the anthracite region. Although they are all supposed to be over twelve, many of them are under that age. There are the "breaker boys" who sit all day in little seats—a day from seven o'clock till six, with a half-hour at noon—picking out slate, dirt, and rock from the coal as it passes through the chutes.

The breakers are very cold in winter, having no heating facilities, save sometimes a few steam pipes,

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usually without steam. The clouds of dust are incessant and very irritating to the eyes and throat. Some inhuman fathers—for not always is the necessity so great as in the case of little William Wilson—even compel their little daughters to join the boys in this dangerous work. Some of the machines in the breakers are so simple that a child can run them as well as a grown person. But think of the little children deprived of light, air, safety, schooling, home care—everything that we consider a child's birthright until he is well beyond the age when these little toilers are earning the pittance that ekes out the scanty income of the family.

But what of conditions above ground? Do these miners have a comfortable home in which to spend their hours of rest? Alas, one need only go through the average mining town to see that their home life is only a shade better than their mine life. The company tenement is still found in the mining towns. The owners claim that it is necessary for them to provide these homes, as otherwise the miners would have no place to live. Rows of unpainted houses, each containing only two or three rooms, almost exactly alike, flimsy and unattractive, blackened by coal dust and weather-beaten by storms—this is a mining town. They are built of the cheapest materials and lack the most necessary conveniences. The water supply is often insufficient, and unsanitary conditions add to the dangers of the miner's life. Exorbitant rents are charged for these shacks. Rarely is there any yard in front, but in the rear may be a small space which sometimes shows an attempt at a vegetable garden. Since Mr. Wilson claims that he learned something

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from his father in amateur gardening, the Wilsons must have been ambitious in that direction. There are some shining exceptions to this treatment of mine workers in the matter of housing, and the company tenement system shows the greatest improvement in the anthracite regions where the miners' organizations are strongest. Young William Wilson and his fellow members of the Labor Union were instrumental in bringing about these changes in the living conditions of the workers.

When the Wilsons were working in the Pennsylvania mines, they were obliged to get their supplies in the company stores. These stores charged higher prices than regular stores in other places, and even if an independent store was started in a mining town it was soon put out of business by the mine owners. Finally, by agitation, protests, and strikes, the company stores in this part of Pennsylvania were obliged to reduce their prices. This meant a steady decline in their profits and eventually the whole system of company stores was given up. They still exist in some places, but prices are not so much in excess of those in privately owned stores.

Yet, despite all these lamentable conditions and the fact that every time the miner descends into the pit he is taking his life into his hands, coal must be had,—modern life demands it and some one must supply it. Yes,—it stuns one to think what would happen to the modern city, like New York or Chicago, if the coal supply should fail some winter—there would be no light, no water, no transportation; hence no food, no clothing! Realizing this, the miner turns philosopher. He goes to his daily work with a cheery

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smile, and takes his life with its miseries as he finds it. He deserves far better than he gets. What chance has he for physical, mental, or spiritual improvement in his environment? When Mr. Wilson was Secretary of the United Mine Workers, he wrote, regarding the miner's life, as follows:

"If there is any man in existence who is entitled to all the necessaries and as many of the luxuries as he cares to partake of, it is the miner, who, taking his life in one hand and his dinner pail in the other, kisses his wife and little ones good-bye in the morning and goes forth with a strong heart to meet the dangers of a most dangerous occupation, with the chances great that he may never meet his loved ones again. Not only does he meet the dangers that come to himself in the regular pursuit of his labor, but no man ever heard of a miner shrinking from the danger of rescuing his fellow men in distress. When accident has befallen any of their number, when a caving in of the roof, a flooding of the mines, or an explosion of fire damp has cut off all avenues of escape, the courage of the miner asserts itself, and he will dare any danger, take any risk, to reach the entombed men or recover their bodies, if dead."

In one of these accidents, of which Mr. Wilson modestly told, it is evident that he showed the same self-sacrifice that he praised in others. The alarm was sounded that a comrade by the name of William Hogan was buried at some place in the mine beneath the black avalanche.

"I started for the rescue," said Mr. Wilson, "with two other fellows, and the shelling of the rock (we

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called it 'shailing') was like the booming of a cannon as on and on we dug our way!"

"You found him, the chap named William Hogan?" asked a listener.

"Oh, yes, we found him. He was sitting on the floor of the mine, his knees drawn up into his ribs. I thought once I heard a voice calling, 'Hurry, boys, for God's sake!' but when we really found him, I did not think it had been possible for him to have called."

"You revived him?"

"Oh, no—he was dead."

Such accidents are often caused by what is called "robbing the pillars." The pillars of coal, really the trunks of prehistoric trees, are originally left to support the roof of the mine. As mining progresses, these pillars, beginning at the farthest back in the mine, are taken down, and wooden props are put in their places. In the above case the men had been sent far in to cut away the stump of a pillar which remained, when all at once the alarm was given that the roof was starting to fall. The other miners escaped, but William Hogan was caught and lost his life. It was a narrow escape, too, for the rescuers.

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CHAPTER VII

Working for the Union

By the time William was thirteen he was a full-fledged miner, when most lads of that age are playing baseball, or if obliged to earn anything, are just selling papers, running errands, or doing some other light work. At this time he became half member of a labor union and has been associated with unions ever since. As Secretary of Labor, he is a union man and has his card. When fourteen years of age he was elected secretary of the local union.

For some reason his father went in search of employment about this time, and the care of the family was virtually placed on the boy's shoulders. Not until he was sixteen could he be admitted to full membership in the union, and after that he became a journeyman miner. A stanza of his poem, "The Coal Miner," the first stanza of which has already been quoted, is appropriate to this period of his life:

> A youthful-like personage, wiry and strong,
> Deep-chested, broad-shouldered, limbs supple and long,
> The coal seems today to be flying more thick
> Than ever before from the point of his pick.
> Fast flows the sweat from each pore of his face,
> As blow after blow brings the coal from its place.
> What pride in his voice as he says: "By the way,
> I want you to know I am sixteen today
> And I want a 'full turn' as a miner."

After becoming secretary of the local union in 1876, his activities in the mines, as a trade unionist, at-

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tracted attention outside, and the mine owners began to take notice. By the time he was eighteen he was marked as a dangerous man, and it was not long before he was most unjustly boycotted by the mine owners. He was compelled to go from mine to mine to get employment, only to find that he was blacklisted, as no company would hire him. He was, therefore, obliged to quit the mines and look about for other work. He drifted West, and became fireman on the Illinois Central Railroad for a time. He worked in saw mills and in lumber yards. He worked in a printing office in Blossburg, near his home, setting type on a newspaper. With characteristic adaptability, he made this job his teacher in punctuation and capitalization, and in grammatical construction. Everything that came William's way was made to serve the purpose of instruction, if it could possibly be turned in that direction. All these experiences at different jobs brought him in touch with trades other than mining, and made him more sympathetic with the workers in all lines.

Meanwhile, at the age of twenty-one, he was married, June 7, 1883, to Miss Agnes Williamson, who was born within a few miles of his old home in Scotland. Eleven children have been born to Mr. and Mrs. Wilson, of whom nine are living. He still failed to get regular employment, and the little home of the newly married couple saw many hardships and deprivations. It is said there are few great men who have not at some time or other seen the bottom of the meal barrel. The future Secretary of Labor saw it very often during these days.

For nearly twenty years this period of irregular employment lasted and Mr. Wilson continued his

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activities as a union leader. He kept up his interest in the miners' organization, encouraged them to hold together, and inspired them with his own enthusiasm. He proved to them his ability as a leader and his absolute integrity as a man. Very few of the mining towns had as high a standard of living as had Arnot, with its people of Scotch and English ancestry. Throughout the country, out into the scattered districts where families, grown men and women, boys and girls, were herded together in degrading proximity, in ignorance and sickness and poverty, Wilson traveled. He aroused them out of their indifference, stirring whatever might be good in them, inspiring them with something of his own indomitable courage, and organizing them into unions where they could make effectual resistance against unusual conditions.

Once he was tricked aboard a train by agents of the mine owners and taken to Cumberland, Maryland. Here he was thrown into jail on the indefinite charge of conspiracy, but in three days they were forced to release him. In one strike they tried to bribe him, in another to kidnap him. They arrested him for "contempt" in West Virginia. They blacklisted him and they enjoined him. He escaped the kidnappers, he laughed at the blacklist, he defied the injunction. "An injunction," he said, "that restrains me from furnishing food to hungry men, women, and children, when I have in my possession the means to aid them, will be violated by me until the necessity for providing food has been removed or the corporeal power of the court overwhelms me. I will treat it as I would an order of the court to stop breathing." The bottom of the meal barrel must have been visible on more than one occasion in those days.

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Once, as a result of his activities, he was evicted from his house. That convinced him that to be independent of other men he must own his own home. In 1896 a man in Arnot rented him a hundred acres of land, so he undertook to farm this land, and, with characteristic Scotch thrift, to save money to buy it. Under his father's direction, he had done some amateur gardening, though one can hardly imagine how he got time for this, with the long hours of a day's work in the mines. But he bravely started in to be a farmer. No doubt his children all contributed, as soon as they were big enough, their share of labor to keep the little farm going.

While still engaged in farming Mr. Wilson was made a "check weighman," to weigh the coal in behalf of the miners—such work being meant to serve as a check against the weighing done by the weighmasters of the company.

During all these stormy times Mr. Wilson had a growing family to support, a mortgage of $1,500 on his little home, and never till he was thirty-six did he earn an average of more than forty dollars a month. Some months his pay might reach as high as eighty dollars, but there were so many lean times when it was below that the average was kept down.

In 1885 Mr. Wilson was one of those who assisted in establishing joint conferences between operators and miners, which have developed the present collective bargaining system in the coal mining industry, reducing strikes and improving the condition of both coal operator and miner. In 1899 he was elected president of the Central Division of the Miners' Union, known as District No. 2.

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CHAPTER VIII

The Strike of 1899-1900

This same year, 1899, in behalf of the miners of Tioga County, Mr. Wilson took charge of the situation resulting from a prolonged lockout. A change of managers of a mine property and the abrogation by the new manager of the conference system, the establishment of which Mr. Wilson had previously secured, resulted in a lockout. It was a long and bitter contest, in which Mr. Wilson, while steadily working to bring the opposing forces together and to re-establish the conference plan, sometimes lost the confidence of some of the more radical of the men he was leading.

As his philosophy of labor is illustrated by the story of this strike, let me briefly tell of its beginning and end. For some years the wage-workers had the benefit of collective bargaining. That is, they had got together once a year and appointed a committee to wait upon the mine owners at a conference. A new manager, however, announced, early in June, 1899, that the mines belonged to the stockholders of the company and that the company was free to operate them exactly as it saw fit. Hence the manager would no longer hold conferences with the miners, but would operate the mines as he desired without reference to the miners.

Of course this was a great shock to the miners and especially to their leaders, who through long years of

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struggle had established the conference principle. The miners and their leaders immediately met and considered the matter. After considerable debate, the following message was sent to the new manager:

"We recognize that the mines are the property of the stockholders and as such the stockholders are free to do with these mines as they see fit so long as they do not interfere with the natural rights of others. We, therefore, regret to report that the new manager is within his full legal rights in refusing to confer with us hereafter. We, however, have also concluded that our bodies belong to us wage earners and that we are likewise free to use these bodies as we would, provided we do not interfere with the just rights of others. The stockholders have decided that they will operate the mines only under certain conditions. We have decided that we will operate our bodies only under certain conditions. Apparently all of us are within our legal rights, whether stockholders or wage workers."

The new manager thought that he won a great victory and went home that night congratulating himself upon his shrewdness. Much to his surprise, however, not a man returned to work the next morning. That was June 18, 1899, and not a pick was raised, nor a wheel turned, nor did an ounce of coal come out of these mines until March 1, 1900, a period of over eight months. During this time the miners marched every morning and night up to the mines and back again to their homes without violence and without causing any disturbance of any kind. Every morning the manager came to the mine, spent the day and returned again at night. Both sides continued to rest

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upon their legal rights, and yet nothing was accomplished. Finally in February, 1900, both sides saw that no headway could be made by depending on legal rights. There is nothing constructive about legal rights. Whether our interests are as stockholders or as wage earners we get on only as we produce. In production the interests of both sides are mutual. The only opportunity there is for dispute is in connection with how that which has been produced shall be divided. This must be determined to the satisfaction of both parties in order to have more production. Such determination can be reached only by representatives of both stockholders and wage workers sitting about the council table in conference.

Mr. Wilson became the idol of the miners, on account of his work for them. In 1900 they made him International Secretary-Treasurer of the United Mine Workers, when John Mitchell was made President. During the eight years that Mr. Wilson held this office millions of dollars passed through his hands without the loss of a one-cent piece. He took charge of a treasury of $16,000 and turned over $1,027,000 to his successor. This organization has three million members and has done much to better the conditions of labor in the mines throughout the country.

In the great strike of 1899 and 1900 the mine owners thought they could discredit him and put him out of the labor movement. They offered him a bribe of $1,500 to desert the miners. He was told it would be an act of kindness to accept the money and end the long bitter struggle; he had only to leave the State on urgent business and matters would be adjusted. The miners need not know he had broken faith with them.

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Fifteen Hundred Dollars was the exact amount of the mortgage on his farm, and he and his wife and eleven children were destitute, as he had turned in his pay as Secretary-Treasurer into the strike fund. Did Mr. Wilson yield to the importunities and representations of the mine owners? He was not even tempted by the bait; for answer he took into his home the families of four striking miners and shared with them his meager fare.

Since that day, in Arnot, a day called Wilson Day is set apart by the miners as a public holiday. Stores are closed, all business is suspended, the people dress in their best clothes and make merry in honor of the man who has proved his superiority to adversity, his ability to overcome obstacles, and has won, by meriting them, the respect and love of an entire community.

Between 1886 and 1894 conditions were very bad in Tioga County. Several men were discharged at the various mines for acting on committees or speaking in favor of organized labor. W. B. Wilson was among the number. He could not get work in any of the mines of the country, except where the superintendent was charitably inclined. Then he would give him a place where the air was so bad that a man could not live in it. A person trying to work under such conditions would often be carried out by his fellow workmen.

Mr. Wilson would visit the mining towns for the purpose of making a labor speech, and could not get a building of any kind to speak in, or a person to act as chairman for him when he spoke in the open with the heavens for a roof. After delivering his address

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to a few men who would have the courage to go and listen to him, he would be obliged to walk to Blossburg, where he lived. Good-intentioned men were afraid of taking him in for the night for fear of being discharged.

After the 1894 strike Mr. Wilson and Mr. John Lyons were chosen as a committee from a mass meeting in Blossburg to go to Red Burn to try and settle a local grievance. On their arrival at Ralston, which is at the foot of the Red Burn plain, they met the superintendent of the mines, Robert Brownlee, and the mine boss, John Wright. The superintendent appeared to be pleased to see them, and told Mr. Wilson that he was glad to meet him, as he could prove that the strike had been a mistake. After several hours' discussion, Mr. Brownlee admitted that he did not understand the mining situation as well as he thought he did, and that Mr. Wilson was right.

Not only do the labor leaders know how to play upon good qualities, such as sympathy, but they also understand the force of the bad qualities, such as jealousy. Many a corporation that has had labor troubles really owes these troubles to jealousy within its own management. The employees have been aware of this jealousy and have fanned it, and on account of it have finally won.

This was especially true in Mr. Wilson's time. A manager of the mines at Arnot was named Lyons, and the head man in New York was named Hines. Lyons was continually trying to secure Hines's position, while Hines was kept busy maneuvering to hold his own place. The employees knew this, and would appeal first to one and then to the other, playing upon the jealousy of both.

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The crisis came in connection with the introduction of check weighing. This the men took up with Mr. Lyons, but without success. Then they went over his head to Mr. Hines in New York, who agreed to the men's plans. Lyons, however, was so provoked that he refused to recognize Hines's orders. The men then secured evidence for Hines that showed him that Lyons had been endeavoring to undermine him right along. The result was that Lyons was fired. This was a great victory for Hines and the men.

Corporations fail to realize how much more the employees know about the officers and foremen than do the stockholders. The employees don't say much, but they see and hear a good deal. In many instances, employees could tell stockholders why the companies are not earning more and wherein their difficulties lie. In talking with Mr. Wilson once regarding giving labor representation on Boards of Directors, he said:

"Labor doesn't seem to be very anxious for such representation, and I am not so keen for it as are many; but I believe that it would be a wonderful thing for the corporations and their stockholders if labor would earnestly take an interest in such plans. I don't see how the labor representatives on Boards of Directors could do any harm, while I am sure they would give the stockholders a new point of view that would be very valuable. Furthermore, I believe that in many cases it would result in much more efficient officers and foremen."

"Industrial peace," says Mr. Wilson, "is both an economic and sociological necessity. It is not an idle dream, but a practical possibility. The chief requirement in achieving it is ability on the part of those

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dealing with issues, as they arise, to put themselves in the other fellow's place; to view the question from all sides fairly and justly."

"The reason why you succeed so, Mr. Secretary, is because you have seen all sides—you have seen life!" I remarked one day.

The Secretary of Labor smiled his kindliest, and his cheeks glowed like the typical Scotchman's.

" All workers," he said,— " all workers see life! "

One doubts that. Many workers are machines, wound up to go so many hours per day and (again one recalls Scripture) because there are those who, having eyes, see not!

But the boy who was buried beneath the rock of the Arnot mines when he was nine years old, the man who led the search for William Hogan, the entombed miner, and the man who spent years of his life "robbing the pillars" of the Pennsylvania coal mines does know life, because his keen blue eyes were not given him only to pick his way through the dark tunnels under the earth. He can see September from the broad piazzas of his Blossburg farm and sing

> . . . of the dusky shadows falling fast,
> A gloaming through the valley cast,
> And, when the russet glow had ceased,
> It awed to stillneess man and beast.
> Each hill and valley, field and wood
> Seemed but a mighty solitude,
> So calm and quiet the night had grown
> Where Nature called the scene her own.

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CHAPTER IX

Something About Farming

W. B. Wilson was always known to have good judgment. His reputation for giving a fair, unbiased opinion began when he was in his teens. He never was moved by hate or prejudice; neither did he become enthusiastic and carried away with new ideas. Although deeply interested in the labor movement, his interest came from a love for his brother workers and their families. He was never a radical, but always a conservative.

His judgment was appealed to, not only in connection with labor problems, but also in connection with business problems. His advice on "prospects" was eagerly sought. If W. B. Wilson thought that a certain stratum of coal would pay for working, the men and money could always be found ready for making the attempt. Even the rich mine owners liked to get Wilson's opinion before opening up a new vein. Even while persecuting him and trying to discipline him for his interest in the unions, they would seek his advice on other matters.

Arnot, Wilson's home town, is a little village all owned by a corporation. It is about five miles from Blossburg, a borough of about 2,700 inhabitants. About half way between Arnot and Blossburg there are outcroppings of coal. They are clearly visible today. I have seen them myself while tramping over these pastures. At one time some men got together

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Picture of Wilson neighbors sitting on piazza of farm house purchased in 1896

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with the idea of opening some mines here. They consulted various people, among them being W. B. Wilson. Every one of these men advised the opening of the mine except Wilson. His report was that the veins were so located that it would not pay to work them. However, the property was purchased and an attempt was made at mining.

After a very short time it was found that W. B. Wilson's opinion had been correct, that the property was not worth developing. As more or less money had been spent, and as a farmhouse, outbuildings, etc., already existed on the property, the owner went to W. B. Wilson and said:

"Wilson, you gave me good advice. You were the only man who gave me good advice. This property is not worth developing for coal, but here are one hundred acres. If you wish to work them as a farm, go ahead and we will share profits together." This was in the year 1896. To one like W. B. Wilson, who had been for so many years working underground in the mines, living only in a stereotyped shanty of the mining company, the idea of being free and living in the open, as God intended, greatly appealed. He immediately moved his family from Arnot, about three miles down the road toward Blossburg, to this farm. The farmhouse was a humble but comfortable dwelling, with large rooms and a small piazza. The farm was pretty hilly, with only a few acres suitable for tilling. There were also about forty acres that gave a fair crop of hay. Most of the land, however, was not only hilly but rocky and consisted of woodland. Still, it was near enough to Arnot for Wilson to work in the mines to eke out while carrying on the

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farm. In this way, he enjoyed what he always believed to be an ideal condition. I refer to his hope that the time will come when men will be tied neither to farms nor to factories, but will work a few months on their farms and then the rest of the year in factories, or that people should be so grouped in communities that they can work, say, six hours in the factories and four hours on the farm.

Mr. Wilson believed that the isolated farm, where the family works from early morning till late at night, stranded away from all intellectual and social life, must go. He also believed that the factory, where men and women are mere machines from morning till night doing one thing, must go. Neither form of life can develop real Americans, as neither allows true self-expression and the growth of those vital qualities which make up life. The conditions for which we should aim are to have each family have its own few acres and have these grouped about a community, with its social and intellectual life, but to have enough factories in this community so that the people would not be dependent on the products of the soil.

Here again the Secretary illustrates his faculty for weighing and adjusting. He looked upon everything as having some good and yet, if carried too far, capable of great evil. The old adage, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," he applied to all departments of life, whether of the farm or of the factory. The development of mankind must come through a mutual intermingling of the farm life and the factory, with home as a center.

But to return to his experience at farming Perhaps I can best tell the story by quoting him as he

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told it to me. Let me, however, first say that from my knowledge of the farm I don't see how he ever got on as well as he did. If W. B. Wilson was able even to make a living for himself on that broken and barren tract, he certainly deserved the greatest praise. Moreover, when one considers that he had spent so much of life in the mines and knew nothing whatever of farming, the wonder is all the greater. This is the way he told the story:

"I had had no experience whatever in farming, although as a boy, under my father's instruction, I had done some amateur gardening. This, however, was not enough to deter me from the attempt. I made an arrangement to farm on shares, the owner of the land providing me with a yoke of oxen. The oxen had been broken to lumbering and had no acquaintance with the farming business.

"I had never driven an ox team, and never save on one occasion had seen a team of these animals driven by any one else. When I yoked them up and started in to plow I had trouble. They were fast walkers, because of their lumbering experience, and it was difficult to keep up with them. I could not keep the off ox going right. Although I 'hawed' and 'gee'd' to the best of my ability, the furrow was a zigzag. Finally I said to the oxen: 'Go as you please. It's all got to be plowed, so take it any way you like.'

"The first year I raised beans, because the soil was so run down that it would not produce anything else. I had cows and we made butter. We raised some chickens; also, when we got around to it, potatoes, cabbage, and other kinds of garden truck. Somehow, I managed to get along and gain a meager livelihood.

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"Eventually I acquired ownership of the farm. It is my home today, in Blossburg, Pennsylvania,—a tract of about a hundred acres."

To a visitor at his farm Mr. Wilson said:

"We farm our lawn. We have none too much land, and we have deemed it better to work the good land than to try to keep up a lawn."

In the stretch in front of the house were a patch of corn, a patch of potatoes, and a field of hay.

The Secretary said his miner friends at Blossburg and Arnot were fond of joking him about his farm and the cliffs thereon. Upon his return to his home at one time some of his friends met him at the station. Upon his asking them how things were, one of them replied:

"Things are all right, Billy, except that your brindle cow fell off your farm and got killed."

There are two things on which Secretary Wilson set his heart. One was the establishment of a substantial back-to-the-soil movement, with government aid; the other, the fostering of seasonal vacations for workers in the cities.

It is not an easy task to take men from the city where they have become used to the life there and put them on farms expecting them to stay. It is only a question of a short time when they will get back to the city again. It is almost the same with immigrants who come to this country after having lived and worked in communities on the other side. They, too, find the life on the farm monotonous; there seems to be something lacking, and in course of time many of them also drift back to the cities.

In this regard Mr. Wilson said: "I have a plan,

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however, and if Congress will only help me, I am quite sure it will be successful. You know that every immigrant coming into this country has to pay a head tax of eight dollars, and since this tax has been in effect it has yielded $10,000,000 more than the cost of the service. Now if Congress will give us that surplus of $10,000,000 to help in our back-to-the-farm movement, I think it will be a question of only a short time when the present congestion in the large cities will be reduced, and the cost of living cheapened considerably in addition. While our plans for this back-to-the-farm movement are, of course, in an embryo state just now, I confidently hope to have them in shape for Congress when it requests them."

"How will this $10,000,000 help your plan; do you intend to buy farms and give them to persons of good agricultural training living in the cities?" some one would then ask the Secretary, as he told his story.

" No, not exactly that," the Secretary would reply; "but we do plan to help them financially to get a start. In starting the back-to-the-farm movement going, our first efforts will be to bring about community life. We intend to gather together a number of families who are more or less congenial. They may or may not be all of the same nationality. Then we will buy the land and lay it out, giving each family whatever allotment it needs, of course charging for it. In addition, we also plan to supply them with farm implements, and, if necessary, with the means to keep them going until they are able to get a return from their farms.

"To protect the Government I would have the individual owner of each farm give us a mortgage or

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note for the money advanced, either for the purchase of the land or implements or the means advanced to keep them until after harvest time. In addition to this, these individual mortgage notes would be indorsed or supervised by the other members of the community, so that we shall have a double guarantee that the money will be returned. It would thus become a rotary fund that could be used over and over again.

"It would not be my intention to establish these farming communities in places far removed from large cities. On the contrary, I propose to get as close as possible to the large centers of population. I mean, of course, as close as the price we believe we can purchase the land for will warrant. Why, I have been told that there are 100,000 acres of tillable land within a hundred miles of New York City that can be purchased for $15 an acre or less. See what the establishment of farming communities in this area would mean to the people of New York.

"I propose that the Secretary of Agriculture assign specialists in the production and marketing of farm products to these various communities, there to aid the farmers in every way to produce the finest crops at lowest cost."

But the back-to-the-soil plans over which Secretary Wilson worked are no more interesting than his plans for what he called harvest vacation clubs. In brief, these clubs would consist of groups of toilers from workshops and factories who during the summer would be sent to farms for vacation periods to aid in such things as hop picking, berry picking, fruit picking, and the like, as well as heavier harvesting.

The idea for this form of recreation was brought

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home to the Secretary when, as a little boy, he worked beside his father in the coal mines of Pennsylvania. Still later, when employed in the iron mines of Oneida County, New York, he received a further demonstration of its efficacy.

"When I was a little boy," Secretary Wilson once said to me, "my father would say to me quite frequently, 'William, while you are resting, drill a hole,' or, 'William, while you are resting, set a prop,' and so on. At that time I did not understand the philosophy of my father's words. It was some years later that my father's philosophy became clear to me, and I learned that a change of work is often a rest. A number of years ago I worked in an iron ore mine at Clinton, New York. At that time it was the center of the hop growing industry. One day I was told that the mines were going to shut down, and that every other industry in the neighborhood was going to shut down, and we were all going hop-picking. I didn't quite understand what it all meant until I got into the hop fields. There we lived several weeks in tents, picking hops in the day and attending hops at night time, and I learned that each year all the employees of the industrial plants at Clinton took a vacation by going into the hop fields. It was a vacation that helped the hop farmers, because it supplied them with the necessary labor to harvest their crops, and it was a vacation that proved a great physical benefit to the employees of the industrial concerns because it was something new. It was out in the open and everybody seemed to enjoy it immensely, and returned to his work in town greatly benefited in health and no worse off financially.

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"Soon after I became Secretary of Labor," Mr. Wilson continued, "the thought occurred to me that if a vacation of this kind was so helpful and successful up at Clinton there was no reason why it should not be taken up advantageously by the larger cities. In fact, my experience last year in supplying labor for the wheat fields has almost convinced me that it will provide a solution for the problem of supplying labor for short periods.

"Last summer," the Secretary went on, "we sent 110,000 men out to the wheat fields. They worked for two and a half months, and then there was nothing for them to do. They had spent their railroad fare to get to these places, and the problem was a serious one. If we had been able to take the men from occupations in the cities, such as glass blowing and foundry work, both of which are confining, and send them out to the wheat belt during the harvest season, how much better would it have been for the men themselves, their employers, and for the farmers. During the summer months work at these occupations is dull, and there would be an opportunity to spend two or three weeks working in the open air, which because of its novelty would prove of much physical value. Of course, such a plan can be put into operation only when employers and employees alike accept it and make preparations in advance to put it into effect."

In this way, the Secretary believed, the health of the men would be much benefited, and at the same time the needs of the farmers would be supplied. To the men who would work it would be a novelty. The work would be out in the open air all day, with plenty

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of good, substantial food and a good place to sleep. It would be a change, and in addition the men employed would receive compensation for their work that would more than pay for their railroad fare.

Should the plans of W. B. Wilson be successful, pale-faced clerks who spend all their time in badly ventilated offices bending over books will be found in the apple orchards, picking the fruit and having a bully good time in doing it. It is also not improbable that pale-faced factory and shop girls will be found in the berry fields and the hop fields engaged in a work different from that in the cities, and consequently affording a pleasant diversion. While, of course, the days will be spent in work in the open air, every provision will be made for the recreation of the workers.

There could be various kinds of entertainments in the evening, so that the mechanic, the clerk, or the factory girl who gives up two, three, or four weeks in the summer to this new kind of work would be benefited in health, and would have all the pleasure to be derived from an ordinary vacation, besides receiving reasonably good compensation.

Of course, Mr. Wilson always had special sympathy for the city man. He loved not only people but animals, and everything else that grew and moved. He was especially fond of dogs, and all dogs seemed to know that Mr. Wilson was fond of them. It was not an unusual thing for a stray dog to greet him on the street like a long lost owner. Mr. Wilson never turned a dog away; in most cases he couldn't if he had wanted to do so, with the result that there are several dogs in the Wilson household.

Many ask me what is the secret of Secretary Wil-

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son's success. Many wonder how it is possible for a man who was forced to leave school at nine years of age to become the Labor Administrator of the greatest nation on the face of the earth during the most critical period of history. Many wonder how this man, who has spent twenty-seven years in the mines underground, working in the darkness, has the remarkable knowledge of conditions and events which he has. Those who have heard him speak, and know of his power, wonder where he got it and how he developed it.

Of course, he secured and developed it by hard work. After his hard day's work in the mines, he immediately went to his books and studied. He was always a great reader and a great student. He never wasted a moment. Whenever the opportunity offered, whether by the miner's lamp in the darkness or by candle light at home or on horseback while traveling over the mountains, if he had a spare moment, he would take a book from his pocket and study. Many will give this explanation as the reason for his success.

People, however, who have studied the careers of great men know that Mr. Wilson's success is not really due to this fact. Lots of people have worked and studied as hard and harder than ever Secretary Wilson did. Moreover, there are thousands of men in the country of whom we have never heard who know infinitely more than Secretary Wilson. Education is a good thing. Work is a good thing. Study and work are necessary for success, but these of themselves are of little value.

W. B. Wilson's real success is due to the fact that he has a heart, and that he knows how to read other

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men through their hearts. Moreover, this is the secret of almost all success. It is well enough to talk about economics, statistics, logic, etc., but these things really cut little figure in the affairs of life. Possibly five per cent. of what we do we do from reason, but fully ninety-five per cent. we do for love of friends and for the satisfaction of our own desires and emotions. We are apt to think that it is things that make the world go round, but this is a great mistake. Buildings, industries, railroads, steamships, and even schools and colleges are the mere shell of the egg. The life of the egg is the heart throb, and it is the heart throb that makes the world go round.

W. B. Wilson's heart throbs. It always did. Moreover, when his heart is throbbing, it seems to make the other fellow's heart throb also. The result is that he makes friends, these friends mean other friends, and all work together for a common good.

This spirit of the man is evident in his published poems and in the letters that he has written, but most of all in his love for animals and things that grow.

His love for others was especially evident to me in connection with the preparation of copy for posters which were used during the war. For nearly all these posters were either written or approved by him. When I wrote the words, "You should stick to your job," he would correct it and say, "*We* must stick to *our* jobs." He constantly kept in mind that the other fellow is just as anxious to do what is right as we are, and that the task is to show him gently what that task is without offending him. Sometimes he would disapprove of copy altogether, and write in the margin

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these words, "Don't scold, rather enthuse;" or he would say, "Appeal to the hearts of the men." I first learned lessons along these lines from George H. Lorimer, editor of the *Saturday Evening Post;* but those were confirmed and emphasized by what I have experienced with W. B. Wilson.

Manufacturers and other employers would come to him to discuss questions of wages and hours, and he would always courteously discuss these two things with them. After the interview was over, however, and these manufacturers had left the room, he would say:

"Oh, how they miss the point! It's not wages and hours, as such, in which wage earners of the country are interested. Wages and hours are but temporary means to an end. Wage earners are no different from the rest of us. We are all actuated by the same basic motives. The three great words of life are self-preservation, self-reproduction, and self-respect. These are fundamental with all normal persons, whether employers or wage workers. Oh, may the time come when the employer will realize that it is not wages or hours that the wage workers are interested in; but rather, they are interested in self-preservation, self-reproduction, and self-respect! When employers grasp this fact, and so arrange industry as to enable the wage worker to work out his self-preservation, self-reproduction, and self-respect, then the question of wages and hours will solve itself. We talk about co-operation. We all want co-operation, but co-operation will come only as employer and wage worker unite in developing means whereby both shall have and enjoy self-preservation, self-reproduction, and self-respect.

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CHAPTER X

Business Cycles

In former times, when the telegraph, railroads, and other modern conveniences were unknown and monetary systems were only of the simplest type, cycles in the business world took the form of "years of plenty" and "years of famine"; but with the advent of modern industrial improvements and business methods we have gradually arrived at a more or less systematic, cyclical condition of affairs affecting the commercial and financial interests of the entire world. As such a cycle consumed the major portion of Mr. Wilson's life, a description is worth while.

All history has been marked by distinct economic cycles. Although of different durations, each cycle has consisted of four distinct periods, namely:

(1) A Period of Prosperity;
(2) A Period of Decline;
(3) A Period of Depression;
(4) A Period of Improvement.

The idea that reckless prosperity can ever become permanent and will not be followed by a business depression, or the idea that there can be an unlimited period of depression without being followed by renewed activity, shows both ignorance of economics and utter inexperience in the business world. Theoretically, there should be a state where everybody is always prosperous and nobody over-extends, where

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the cost of living is reasonable, and the wage earner has a margin to save for old age. Yet it is true that we have never so far seen a condition so equable.

As above indicated, if the business of every country were left to progress along a normal line of growth (such as is represented by XY on the *Babson Composite Plot*), neither being inflated beyond what it should be nor declining below its proper mean, there would be no cycles, and panics, depressions, and booms would be things of the past; but up to the present we have not experienced this. Nevertheless, the varying periods continue less violent in the older and more conservative countries like England and France, although radical and marked in our own comparatively new continent where the temperament of the people is so energetic, impatient, and impulsive.

There are various changes in the business conditions of our country which are generally known as minor cycles. These are of a duration of only a very few years (witness such depressions as those of 1884, 1903, etc.); but these are only incidents in the great general or major cycles of about twenty years' duration—1837-1857, 1857-1873, 1873-1893, and 1893-1914, the last two of which had an important effect upon Mr. Wilson's life.

Let us examine the various features connected with each period. Let us imagine ourselves in the midst of an era of improvement, such as was incident to the period beginning about 1878 or 1898, at a time when Mr. Wilson and his associates had plenty of work. Let us assume that the accumulated surplus on the merchants' shelves has now been sold, and new orders are coming in, first with a measured increase,

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and later like an avalanche. The workmen who a few years before were despondent and out of work are now carrying the "full dinner pail and singing a blithesome song." Over time and "double shifts" will soon be the order of the day. Railroad affairs, so long in a dormant or unsatisfactory condition, are now awakened into life,—first for repairs and equipment, then for improvements, and later on for extensions and double trackings.

Consumption now exceeds production, causing a continued rise in prices, merchants buy freely, and stock up with large bills of goods, fully believing that the increasing demand will enable them to sell much merchandise at a handsome profit. In consequence of this new demand, the smaller firms begin to expand, hire more elaborate quarters, add to their working force, and the larger established companies plan new factory buildings and great campaigns for a permanently enlarged business. Right at this point the tendency to over-build and over-expand appears, especially among those who have not given sufficient attention to fundamental conditions, and watched bank clearings, foreign trade, crops, etc., or all combined as shown on the *Composite Plot.*

The big interests plan not only for present needs and growth, but for many years hence, on the supposition that business will increase indefinitely at the same rapid rate. The more conservative resist at first the temptation to expand unduly; but later, seeing the other concerns preparing to take the lion's share of the extra demand for goods in their line, increase their own plants to keep pace with the expansion.

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The cut-throat competition of a few years previous is almost forgotten in the effort to fill orders at fancy prices. This is the period when competition gives way to consolidation, and the manufacturing and other interests, tired of price and rate wars, naturally tend to co-operation inasmuch as there is more than enough business for all. They, in fact, inaugurate plans for close alliances and consolidation of interest which will do away, as far as they are concerned, with the disastrous times they have lately experienced. Such a period of railroad "community of interests" and trust forming existed in 1870, when Billy Wilson as a boy landed at Ellis Island, and then again in 1890, and later in 1910.

The beginning of this real activity is the sign for the foreign population to rush for the "boom" country. Many laborers, who had a few years before crowded the outgoing steamships to return with their savings to the "Old Country" where living was cheap, now return to take advantage of the great demand for labor and good wages. At first the immigration figures show a small increase, then a larger increase, until finally every incoming ocean steamer is crowded, and the steamship authorities, intent on making up for lost time, search high and low for European peasants to swell the lists of those who make up their steerage traffic as they come to take advantage of our prosperity.

Skilled labor also enjoys particular advantages during such periods, as competitive bidding for its hire becomes more and more keen. As the increased demand raises the prices of labor, workers become more and more independent, labor unions and "walk-

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ing delegates" thrive, strikes are likely to predominate and increase almost in proportion as prosperity increases. As Mr. Wilson has often said, "Conditions make the agitators; the agitators do not make conditions."

As the hum of manufacturing activity continues from day to day, and news of high wages, short hours, and double time is scattered abroad, many are attracted from the country to the city. In this way a surplus of labor is finally accumulated in the cities at the expense of the farms and agricultural production. This tends to cut down the amount of raw products, and at the same time raises the price of commodities, all of which still further overstrains the already expanded condition of affairs. Employers, anxious to keep their plants running and turn out their orders, are now likely to accede to all demands of labor. The workmen ask for more money, pleading the increased cost of living, and the employer immediately has recourse to higher prices for his goods. Mr. Wilson enjoyed this period for a short time during his life; but it did not last long.

Commodity prices are all this time gradually increasing during a period of prosperity. Iron and copper, with other construction materials, are continually on the ascending scale. Food stuffs and clothing enhance in value. Opportunity then exists for the unscrupulous manipulator to corner the necessaries of life, take advantage of the extraordinary demand on the part of manufacturers, and force prices skyward until a smash occurs. These excessive prices and general optimism cause merchants and manufacturers gradually to extend their borrowing and build

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up an inverted pyramid of over-expansion until the day comes when it fails with a stupendous crash. Mr. Wilson was hit by two of these blows—in 1873 and again in 1893, with an intermediate crack in 1884.

But, to go back a little before this time, when banks are overloaned and everything is strained to the breaking point, there is likely to occur what is known as a "money" or "stock market" panic. The purchasing power of the public has reached a limit, a selling movement and a shock occurs, everybody is frightened, and almost before it is known the stock market has collapsed. As may be expected, in case such a "rich man's panic" occurs, the losses are principally in and around the great centers like New York, while the West scarcely feels the effect at all. A recovery, however, usually comes after this first crack. The stock market rallies, and the principal result is that many who were caught in the crash do not again return to speculation.

Yet railroad earnings continue to increase, being little affected by the temporary Wall Street trouble. The great agricultural sections of our country preserve their optimistic attitude. The very fact that the "crash" has occurred (even though it be only a crash in Wall Street), and is now a thing of the past, is reassuring to those who are not sufficiently informed. The best informed investors, however, have already sold the highest grade bonds some time ago, and are now in the process of liquidating their more speculative bonds. Consequently bond prices are now gradually falling, while stocks may again be engineered for a rise.

During such a period extravagance runs riot. The

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better grade clerks and mechanics, who have been living in cramped quarters since the depression in the struggle to come out "square," move into better and more congenial homes. Real estate sells at nearly top figures. Credit expands, money is easy, and rates are low. Commodity prices climb skyward, wages are increasing, money is made freely and consequently quickly spent. The better classes now turn their attention to foreign travel in the effort to spend some of the money which has been made. Long vacations, elaborate excursions, and luxurious living is the general order of the day. Capital is exhausted by such methods, but in the good feeling that predominates, and the extravagance that prevails, the future is mortgaged with the idea that good times will continue indefinitely. All this tends to selfishness and self-indulgence, qualities that breed social and moral waywardness, which in turn demands more money and inculcates a disposition to get it by fair means or foul. Hence the awful corruption that is disclosed when the day of reckoning appears. Hence the bitter attitude of the masses when this corruption is disclosed.

At such a time the whole situation is strained nearly to its utmost limit. Banks are overloaned, reserves are low, capital is exhausted in this country, and much is drawn from foreign centres. Over-production is rife, the railroads are clogged with transportation, a great shortage in cars occurs, and orders are delayed. The stock market is by this time pushed to new inflated levels, and all is ripe for the inevitable decline. Only some startling event is necessary to start values on a downward scale, and often this oc-

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curs in the form of a great earthquake, a fire, assassination, crop failure, labor strike, or other conclusive event, and generally the failure of some large banking concern follows.

For some time the insiders have been selling. At last the market begins to fall. Interest rates have been increasing for some time, as the demand for money for speculation increases, and now rates rise rapidly and a great shortage of loaning ability occurs. For a long while the bears have been attacking the market with indifferent success; but now a continuous decline occurs in spite of all the bulls can do to resist it. At such a time stock values have been known to shrink $2,000,000,000 or more within six months. Thousands of business men and others are caught unprepared, and carried down in the rush. Many, carried away with the apparent great prosperity, do not even dream of such a crash, but wake up too late and find themselves ruined. Failures now abound. Then comes the sad day for labor which W. B. Wilson has seen only too often. These are the experiences that make the friends of labor fearful of the capitalistic system.

Apprehension now takes the place of confidence. Prices having become so high, people can stand it no longer, especially those living on fixed incomes. Expenses are curtailed, high-priced foods and other commodities are tabooed, and the result is a loss of orders on the part of manufacturers. When production exceeds consumption prices fall owing to the severe competition which follows. This decline is first felt in raw materials, and such articles as pig iron, copper, wheat, corn, and other grains, butter, eggs, and pro-

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visions are now due for an extensive slump. As iron enters so largely into railroad construction and many other lines of trade, when caution begins to prevail a great scramble is made on the part of the users of this commodity to cancel orders. This causes still further disaster. Extreme dullness in the iron and steel industry is soon felt in other similar lines. At this period occurs the hand-to-mouth policy so much dreaded by manufacturers. Demand for goods decreases to a minimum because everybody is hoping to take advantage of still lower prices.

This leaves manufacturers with large stocks of goods which they not only find it hard to dispose of, but which are often sold at a loss. As these stocks of goods represent a great amount of money, which is not readily available, further failures follow. This also continues to overstrain the banking situation still more.

At this juncture the farmer, who has been paying enormous prices for his necessities, holds back grains and other products of his fields in the hope of getting better prices later on. Finding, however, that prices do not readily rise, he throws his goods on to the market, and concerted action of many serves to hold the price down by glutting the market.

Railroads have at this end of the boom replaced their long time bond issues by short term notes, in the hope that the prevailing high interest rates will be lower at the maturity of these issues. At maturity, however, it is found almost impossible to get the market to absorb any new issues at all. New projects are postponed, equipment orders are called off, and while an effort is made not to discharge any men,

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a general slackening is felt, causing increasing dullness in the iron and steel centers and affiliated trades. This is a period when railroad gross earnings are fairly large, but owing to slackened business and costs not yet liquidated, net earnings tend to show a falling off. At this point the weaker companies, one by one, pass their dividends, more hesitation occurs, and apprehension grows.

During the previous boom more and more investors and speculators purchased real estate. Land values in city and country consequently appreciated. There seems to be a feeling prevalent that land is something more permanent and substantial, and therefore will not depreciate. On the contrary, however, some of the greatest depressions from which labor has suffered have been in part due to over-speculation in real estate. The law of equal and opposite reaction applies to land values as to everything else. This especially hits the working class, who, at the time of high-priced commodities, are driven little by little from their city homes to the suburbs and country.

The real estate promoter finds he has over-built, and the farmer also, on account of lower prices for his products, suddenly awakes to the fact that he has overdrawn on the future and inflated farm prices go down. It must be remembered, however, that the farmer generally feels the effect of the decline less than almost any one else, largely on account of the fact that his wares will always be purchased sooner or later, and at some price.

According to Mr. Wilson's experience, it is at this juncture that labor begins to feel the effect of the downward trend. Immigration has steadily declined

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for a considerable length of time, especially since railroad construction and new building projects began to be curtailed. Over time has ceased, shorter hours have begun. Now comes a gradual shortage of positions obtainable, and others, taking advantage of the slow-down, decide to reduce the wages of their employees. This is always a hardship. The men in good times have been educated to better living, and it is hard to curtail. During the latter end of the period of prosperity strikes were prevalent for more pay, recognition of various organizations, etc., but now the workmen are likely to strike to better themselves or to prevent curtailment of their opportunities. This often leads to a long and disastrous labor complication. The unions are conciliated by capital when rush orders are to be filled, and thus strikes are postponed; but when orders don't exist there is likely to occur a great conflict which extends into the depression and lasts until the laborers see their case is hopeless.

The stock market meantime continues its downward course. Fear and apprehension increase, and optimism reluctantly gives way to pessimism. Luxuries are given up by the wholesale. The people, at last awaking to the fact that a wide-spread depression is imminent, begin to urge reform of every type. The party in power for some time has been scanning the handwriting on the wall, and now opens political agitation for supposed betterments on every hand. If a presidential election is at hand, another party is likely to be intrusted with the reins of government.

While nearly everything and everybody is assuming a pessimistic tone, there is one factor that as-

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sumes a hopeful outlook. At the height of the previous prosperity, when speculation was rife in other forms, the slower, safer, and less remunerative bond market was almost deserted. Prices, except on the more speculative issues, had dropped to a low ebb. But now more conservative investors, tired of recent happenings, are turning again to high grade, fixed income securities, and the bond market, beginning with the highest grade issues, is now improving every week.

Interest rates rise, first slowly, then sometimes with lightning-like rapidity, until money cannot be obtained at any rate whatever. These high rates cause merchants who are investing in shares to sell their stocks in order to obtain the necessary funds for their business, and this acts as an additional depressive factor. Everything combines to make matters worse. Many small depositors (and often some very large ones, it is feared) withdraw their funds, a run on the banks occurs, and the panic is on. Fear begets fear, and the whole monetary and banking system has in the past been so interwoven that bank failures spread rapidly. In the great depression beginning in 1893 several hundred banks went under. Mr. Wilson then saw many of the workers lose their all.

Money, after the strain is over, gradually becomes as low as it was previously abnormally high, but many can not use it. As firms try to extricate themselves from their financial tangles, failures, large and small, continue among mercantile houses for a considerable length of time. Every week brings news of one after another that has gone under. Imports decrease amazingly, both in quantity and value. Mills close

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down, railroads retrench,—in fact, it is not remarkable if they go into bankruptcy altogether.

After such an acute panic there comes a long drawn out period of dullness in which the majority of people are troubled and discouraged beyond measure. Confidence, that asset of so vital importance to the business world, is now destroyed. Not only is nearly every line of business in a depressed condition, but the optimistic spirit of the people which has prevailed so long is now chilled. When optimism turns to pessimism, it is only a slow, gradual process that will replace the shattered confidence of the business world.

The stronger houses continue to exist only because able to carry on business at a loss, all the time hoping for the day to come when the tide will turn and they can recoup their extensive losses. It is a case of the survival of the fittest, and those who are sagacious enough to be informed concerning fundamentals and to be strong in cash at such times reap a golden reward for their foresight.

This is why the great business men like Rockefeller, the late Marshall Field, and others, not only were secure in these periods when others were undergoing the agony of failure, but were positively able to lay the foundation for tremendous profits later on. It is an open fact that the great oil magnate stored cash in large quantities against the time when he could buy up his competitors at panic prices. The great Chicago merchant, at the time when manufacturers were scraping the trade with a fine-tooth comb for orders, would contract to take their output for a term of years at a rate even above depression prices, but which, of course, would be low enough to enable him

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to make a handsome showing as the country emerged from the depression and entered the period of prosperity again.

Mr. Wilson has called these things to my attention not in any complaining spirit, but only as an illustration of why labor feels as it does toward such men. Capital is vigorously assailed by those who have been thrown out of employment, and many times it is blamed for the whole trouble. Strikes are at first violent, but finally the operatives subside into sullen and dogged discouragement, their debts pile up, vagrancy increases, and the situation is one of great hardship for mechanics and operatives. Immigration declines to a minimum, and many of the foreign laborers who came in swarms to our shores a few years before, now return to their old homes, either to live in plenty for the remainder of their lives or to await an opportunity to return when the next boom is on. A period of this sort occurred when Coxey's army marched to Washington and will be long remembered by our people.

Hesitation marks the attitude of nearly everybody. The hoarded money continues to lie idle, being attracted only after a long while from its hiding places. Even good speculative opportunities are passed by in the extreme conservatism. For a time a cash basis is insisted upon. The rule of the day is now hard work among nearly all classes. Extravagance has had its day, the penalty has been paid, and now an era of saving is in force. Small stocks are carried on the shelves, wages are reduced, many are forced to change to other occupations, less expensive quarters are sought out, and the city returns many to the country

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where the shattered fortunes may be retrieved. This eventually helps the great West, and opens its resources.

Commodity prices are low, hence exports increase to take advantage of the better prices and better trade conditions abroad, and interest rates continue heavy. Stock market transactions are almost negligible, the brokers are despondent, and many of them go out of business.

Confidence has suffered fearfully, but little by little the situation changes. Many times matters have been said to be improving, but hope was dashed to the ground. Finally a slight but real progress is seen. Money piling up in the banks, instead of going into use, indicates an abnormal condition—that fear still reigns in place of confidence; but the accretion of funds steadily continues until confidence gradually asserts its sway. The growth of confidence naturally depends on the force of the shock it previously sustained, and on the various surrounding conditions, favorable and unfavorable. But the knowledge that such great sums are accumulating in the banks of the country is an important factor in restoring confidence. Such an accumulation of money acts as an object lesson and tends ultimately to cheapen the value of money, depriving it of the false estimate that has been put on it for some time past. Finally it becomes necessary for the owners of this capital to get an interest return, and the money gradually begins to circulate in business channels and thus to start up better times. So again an extreme cures itself. Loans and discounts are the best indices at this time of the re-

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turn of confidence, and they form at all times the best barometer of mercantile activity.

The process of reorganization and rehabilitation is slow and tedious. Capitalizations are scaled down, new managements are placed in charge, and conservative measures adopted for carrying on the enterprises which have been brought into disrepute by reckless speculation. At length the surplus funds seek an outlet for investment, and there is developed a buying of the older and higher grade issues. Railroad bonds and municipals develop a fair market. A few new issues are tried. If success attends them, confidence improves, and even while many are complaining of the fearful depression, and are beginning to think that there will never be an improvement, bond prices begin to rise.

The very low interest rates and surplus capital available cause men to turn to the best place for investment. This is not usually the securities market, as they are fearful of getting their funds in an unliquid form again, and that class of investments which was the first to go down is now the first to appreciate in price. The public as yet does not enter the market. Even the investor is not buying, but only those who are students of fundamental business conditions and who have been studying the *Composite Plot,* and thus know that matters are now on a sound basis. The majority of people can not now be induced to buy a stock or bond at any price. The memory of the past is still strong, and they are waiting for everybody else to buy before they buy.

Good commercial paper is now hard to obtain, and the return on it is very small. Finally, the banks,

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seeking an outlet for surplus funds, turn to the bond market, and this starts an active business in this class of securities. This encourages the investor, and little by little the situation improves until a good bull movement in bonds is in full force. The stock speculator, not slow to take advantage of everything, has for some time been trying to work stocks upward. A small rise has been quickly followed by a decline, as some became frightened or sought to take profits, and transactions are very small. As the bond market gets on a good foundation, however, and as confidence returns, a desire appears to get greater profits than in the higher grade, low interest bearing securities, and the stock market, for a long while almost despaired of, now shows a real improvement.

The banks and other institutions now endeavor to make a better showing to stockholders, and look for higher yield. The water has been squeezed out of many stock issues, values are better than for many years, the outlook is more hopeful, and these institutions now begin to invest in preferred stocks which are believed to be absolutely good. This encourages the investor, who has already found that his venture in bonds was opportune, and gradually an active and rising stock market is developed.

Meanwhile debts, in a large measure, have been paid off. The economy of the people for some years has relieved the extravagance of the former period. Surplus stocks are leaving the merchants' shelves. A large export trade has still further depleted them, and a demand is springing up which is felt first in raw materials, and later in manufactures. Pig iron, always a sensitive barometer, is one of the first commodities

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to show an improvement in price, and other metals follow. The necessities of life, and other materials that enter into most general and diversified use, now appreciate. A better demand is felt in our own country, and exports fall off as sales become more active here.

The better feeling gradually extends to every form of business. Railroads begin to plan improvements and to enter the market for equipment. New issues are being financed continually. Factories, so long dormant, awake to new life. Labor is better employed. Immigration at last is on an ascending scale again. New construction takes on activity. Plans for new propositions are unfolded and taken up as the improvement in trade increases, gradually at first, but increasing until the boom period is reached again.

Following the increased activity of and rise in commodity prices, the speculative element starts a bull campaign in grain, produce, etc., and this gives a still greater impetus to all kinds of business. This is the signal for the farmer and Western land speculators to begin an upward movement in real estate, and land values increase, mortgages abound, and an incipient Western boom is on its way again. Finally, and this is the last thing to move, real estate in the city is also in demand again. New offices are taken, the "to let" signs little by little are removed from the windows of our skyscrapers and dwelling houses, and an optimistic view of the situation begins to be taken by all. This completes the cycle and brings us back to the point at the beginning of this chapter coincident with the period of improvement. Only as these cycles are understood by the reader, and it is realized that Wil-

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liam B. Wilson has struggled through two of them, can his point of view toward men and money be understood.

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CHAPTER XI

Railroading in Iowa

The great panic of the 'nineties left the country prostrated industrially. No industry suffered more than the soft coal industry; no part of the country suffered more than western Pennsylvania, where the Wilsons lived.

But the Wilsons suffered not only from the heavy hand of business prostration, but also from the strong prejudice of the mine owners. On account of his part in the strike of 1894, Mr. Wilson was hated and persecuted by the mine owners of western Pennsylvania. It was impossible for him to get a job. Although of a peaceful and kindly nature, a man who never said a word against another, he was labeled a dangerous agitator. This was simply because he was a member of the National Executive Board of the United Mine Workers of America. He received no salary for this work, but held the position simply from love for his fellows.

At first the mine owners attempted to scare him. The lawyers, the courts, the police, all were controlled by the big corporations owning the mines, the houses, the stores, the churches, the schools, the railroads, yes—everything. These hard-hearted men, through their hired agents, stooped to the meanest possible methods of persecution. They haled Mr. Wilson into court. The court enjoined him for contempt. Only when the masses arose and surrounded the Court House was he acquitted by Judges Hoffman and Boyd.

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The mine owners did not stop at this. When he was acquitted on the above charges, the police, who were simply their hired agents, came and arrested him for conspiracy. This was in Lonaconing, Maryland. Was he taken to Arnot, or Blossburg, or any other place where he had friends? No, he was taken to Cumberland, Maryland, and there thrown into jail. All this was done secretly. His friends did not know whether he had been murdered or kidnapped. But the whole countryside turned out to help search for him and in two days they found him.

Wilson always had friends. He knew that the motive of life is the heart; he appealed to others through their hearts and others appealed to him through his heart. And here is where the lawyers with all their intelligence and wealth failed in their purpose to crush him. His friends succeeded in getting him out of jail; they took him before a Justice of the Peace and he was let off on $500 bonds for appearance.

Was he guilty? I think the fact that the lawyers of the mine owners never would permit the case to come to trial answers that question. He never started a disturbance in his life. He used his whole physical, mental, and spiritual energy to prevent violence. When the courts failed and the jails failed, then the mine owners called out the militia. The whole militia of the district was called to an encampment at Frostburg, Pennsylvania. There the soldiers waited for an excuse to pounce upon Wilson and his followers, but the opportunity never came.

When everything else failed, there was one punishment which the mine owners always had. They were

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able to refuse a workman a job. They refused to hire Wilson. They urged others to refuse to hire Wilson. They said: "We can't crush him, but we can starve him. We will refuse to give him work or let others give him work until his wife and children cry with hunger, and then he will come around to our terms."

This was the method which the mine owners employed against him in 1881, when, with fifty others, he was thrown out of employment during the cold winter months, without a thing to fall back upon. That was when he found from sad experience what it was to be blacklisted. That was when he was forced to dig ditches as a common laborer, to work in the woods as a lumber jack, wood chopper, bark peeler, and log driver.

Perhaps one of the most interesting experiences of the time when he was under the ban of the blacklist was when he was railroading. He had tramped from Arnot, Pennsylvania, through New York State across Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, to Iowa, hunting for work. Everywhere the report had preceded him that he was blacklisted. It made no difference how badly he wanted the work or how willing he was to work—he was blacklisted. It is his memory of these days that caused him to say with tears in his eyes:

"The world does not owe every one a living, but it does owe every one an *opportunity to make a living.*"

For weeks he had tramped and tramped, looking for work. People were anxious to have him until they learned that he was one of the miners of northern Pennsylvania. Then they threw him out and he was obliged to tramp farther.

Finally he reached Waterloo, Iowa. The first per-

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son whom he hit for a job was a man in charge of the railroad yards, whose name was Densmore. Mr. Wilson went to this man, told him his story honestly, as he always did, and Mr. Densmore replied:

"If a man is willing to work, I am willing to give him an opportunity. I care not what others say or think."

So Densmore gave Wilson a job. His first work was in the yard, shoveling coal. He was such a good shoveler that he was soon made fireman on a freight locomotive. After working around the yards on a shifting engine for some time, he was sent out on trips. It was on one of these trips that he learned to become sympathetic with the railroad men. Perhaps the story of his last trip will explain the reason.

The order had come in for an engineer named Kennedy and a fireman named Wilson to leave Waterloo on a certain morning for Fort Dodge, a run of about one hundred miles. At the end of this run, just as they were pulling in, telegraphic orders came for them to run during the night to Le Mars. They had just reached Le Mars the next morning when orders on the wire came for them to take the run from Le Mars back to Fort Dodge. This order they obeyed, though it meant that they had been twenty-eight hours without sleep. Then, just as they were entering Fort Dodge and were about ready to drop in their tracks, orders came for them to take a train to Ackley and return, a run of sixty miles and two hours additional, each way. On returning to Fort Dodge, they were sent back to Waterloo, and then from Waterloo to Dubuque, a distance of ninety-three miles and return.

But the boys didn't complain. Wilson said he could

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shovel coal as long as the other chap could hold on to the throttle. They had been on a run of about seventy-four hours, when suddenly Wilson noticed that the engineer was nodding. He awoke him and soon saw him nodding again. He woke him the second time, and again found him sleeping. The third time, he told the engineer to lie down on the floor of the cab and Wilson himself took the throttle and acted as engineer. Suddenly the red light of a passenger train came into view a few feet ahead of him. He threw in the reverse, he put on the brakes, and stopped the freight train just as the two trains came together. No one was hurt. The cow catcher was bent and the rear platform of the passenger train was a little dented, but that was all. No, I won't say it was all, for it did do one other thing—it satisfied W. B. Wilson as to railroading. When he got his engine back he said, "No more for me;" but from that day to this he has had a warm spot in his heart for the railroad men of America. This explains why, like the miners, they have been solidly behind him. He has been able to understand them, and what else is there to life other than love, hope, sympathy, and understanding?

After going to bed and sleeping for a day, he again came to himself and started out again to get work. This time he got a job at a stone quarry.

But the best part of it all is that, notwithstanding these experiences, Mr. Wilson has always felt kindly toward owners and could always see both sides of every controversy. It was only a year or two after these experiences, when he was attending a convention back in Pennsylvania, that he said:

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"Strikes between labor and capital are like wars between nations—they bring suffering and privation to the parties involved and often injury to the innocent bystander. For that reason working men seldom engage in a strike except where they have a real grievance or an imaginary grievance which has all the force of reality to them; and for the same reason employers seldom permit a strike to occur unless they believe that a vital principle is involved which they cannot surrender. How much better it would be, then, for all parties concerned instead of resorting to strikes and lock-outs to sit around the council tables and endeavor to work out their differences on a basis as nearly equitable as the circumstances surrounding the industry would permit."

It was owing to this hard experience of tramping from place to place for a job that he insisted on a United States Employment Service when he had the opportunity. In this connection he said to me one evening:

"To my mind there has always been lacking in our institutions the proper means of connecting the employer and employee. We have had a clearing house for almost every other purpose imaginable—clearing houses of finance, clearing houses of cotton, clearing houses for wheat, clearing houses for every kind of human production—but we have no clearing house for human labor. The idea, or rather the nucleus—I might more properly say the germ—was first indicated in the Federal law when our immigration law was created. We were receiving from foreign countries large numbers of immigrants. They were people who came here having the vision of human liberty.

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They were inspired with the hope that comes for a knowledge of our institutions. They had disposed of all of their little belongings in their home countries and had come to our shores, spending their possessions in the transportation, and when they reached here they were not in a position to go on the land, cultivate, and live upon it until they could get returns therefrom. They could not go out upon the land as farm laborers, because since the introduction of modern machinery farming has become to a very great extent a seasonal occupation, and so they drifted into those classes of labor where they could secure speedy returns from their toil, where they could be paid at stated periods. They created in our industrial centers a congested condition, and we had large numbers of them unemployed. The number of unemployed varied in different periods, but there was always a condition existing where the man around the corner needed some repairs for his house and the carpenter around the corner needed the work, and neither knew of the needs of the other because there was no clearing house. To relieve that condition so far as it affected the immigrant there was placed in our immigration law a section creating a division the duty of which would be to find opportunities for the immigrant, and some thoughtful legislature added the words 'and others.' That division maintained an office in the Barge Office at New York. Here and there it was able to place the immigrant in some agricultural pursuit.

"There was a disposition on the part of labor in industrial pursuits to fear the placement of those workmen in industrial occupations and to fear the competition of those men. To my mind the fear was

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based on a misconception of the economic conditions. I have more fear—and I may say that while I was myself engaged in actual physical work I had more fear—of the man who had no job than I did of the competition of the man who did have a job. The placing of those men in industrial pursuits was more beneficial to the man who worked for wages than allowing them to congregate in our large cities and industrial centers without any occupation whatever.

"However, the little division struggled along for years, placing a few hundreds of people annually, until the Department of Labor was created, a little more than five years ago, and we came to the conclusion then that the activities of that division ought to be extended. That also added but one thought to the thoughts that had gone before. We believed that the field of the division should be made broader and we took steps to accomplish that end. Then came the period of depression in 1914, with millions of workers out of employment; and at the same time the farmers in the great wheat belt in the Middle West needed tens of thousands, even hundreds of thousands of workers. But the worker idle in the city did not know of the opportunity for work in the wheat fields. We then conceived the idea of bringing the information to the idle workers that employment was to be had for a brief period of time in the harvest fields. We had no funds with which to reach the harvest fields; but we gave them the information, and as a result the farmers saved their crops.

"That turned my attention to another phase of the problem and the possibility of putting into operation what to me for years had been a dream, and to me

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seems yet but purely a dream. Time and again I have presented the thought to different bodies of men; time and again we have sent representatives of the Department of Labor out with the idea of putting into practical operation the dream which I believed would remedy that phase of the problem. Why could there not be a complete change of work for wage earners during some period of the year? Why could this not be put into actual operation in our great specialized crop sections of the country in harvesting wheat, in picking cotton, in gathering fruit, and the other specialized farming elements that are seasonal in their nature? I have hoped that some day it would be put into operation, and I feel that now, when we need the fullest efficiency of our labor power, something might be done to make that dream of mine come true.

"We are now engaged in a great conflict; how long it is going to last no one knows, so far as time is concerned. The nearest that we can come to stating a definite conclusion of the conflict is that it will come to an end when Prussian militarism has been crushed and our own institutions are free from any menace from them. That may be within a year or two years; it may not be for a long period of time, and we must prepare not merely for the termination in a short period of time, but we must prepare for the continuation of the war until our children have the same opportunity of working out their own destiny in their own way that we have in working out our destiny in our own way.

"I am reminded by the situation over on the other side of an anecdote that I once heard of a canny

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Scotch farmer who had a horse for sale, and he advertised it. A man from the city came out in response to the advertisement to look at the animal. He examined it all over carefully. He was a lover of horses, and he found it to be clean of limb, to be sound of wind, not a blotch or blemish upon it anywhere. He was well pleased with its appearance and asked the farmer the price of the animal. The farmer said to him: 'I see you are very well pleased with the horse, but I want to be honest with you, the horse has two faults. I am willing to tell you what one of the faults is before you buy the horse, and I will tell you the other fault after you have bought it.' The man from the city thought that a very fair proposition. Before buying the horse he asked what the first fault was, and the farmer said: 'The first fault is that when he is out in the pasture he is awfully hard to catch.' The man from the city said that that would not make any difference to him; he was going to take the horse to the city where it would be hitched up to his carriage, or if not, would be tied in the stable, and so the fact that it was difficult to catch would make no difference to him. Having bought the horse, he said to the farmer, 'Now, what is the other fault?' 'Well,' said the canny Scot, 'the other fault is that after you have caught him he isn't worth a d—n.' ''

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CHAPTER XII

The Great Strike of 1902

Mr. Wilson enjoys telling the story of his first strike, when he was a boy working in a coal mine. He had organized a debating society, and later a union among the boys, and was always their leader. They were, therefore, ready to follow his guidance when, their wages having been reduced, he decided it was time to do something. He was spokesman for the boys, and went to the foreman, telling him the boys had decided to strike unless their former wages were restored to them. The foreman looked at him quizzically for a moment, then he settled that strike then and there by taking the future Secretary of Labor across his knees and giving him a sound spanking, while his fellow would-be strikers scurried away to a safe place.

"Ever since that day," Mr. Wilson said, with a twinkle in his eye, "I have not believed in the use of force to settle labor disputes. Instead of the use of force, what we need is the spirit of justice, of fair play, that will result in a permanent industrial peace."

While Mr. Wilson was Secretary-Treasurer of the United Mine Workers of America he always used his influence in trying to settle labor troubles by conferences between the operators and miners, and approved an order to strike only as a last resort. He held this position in the United Mine Workers of America

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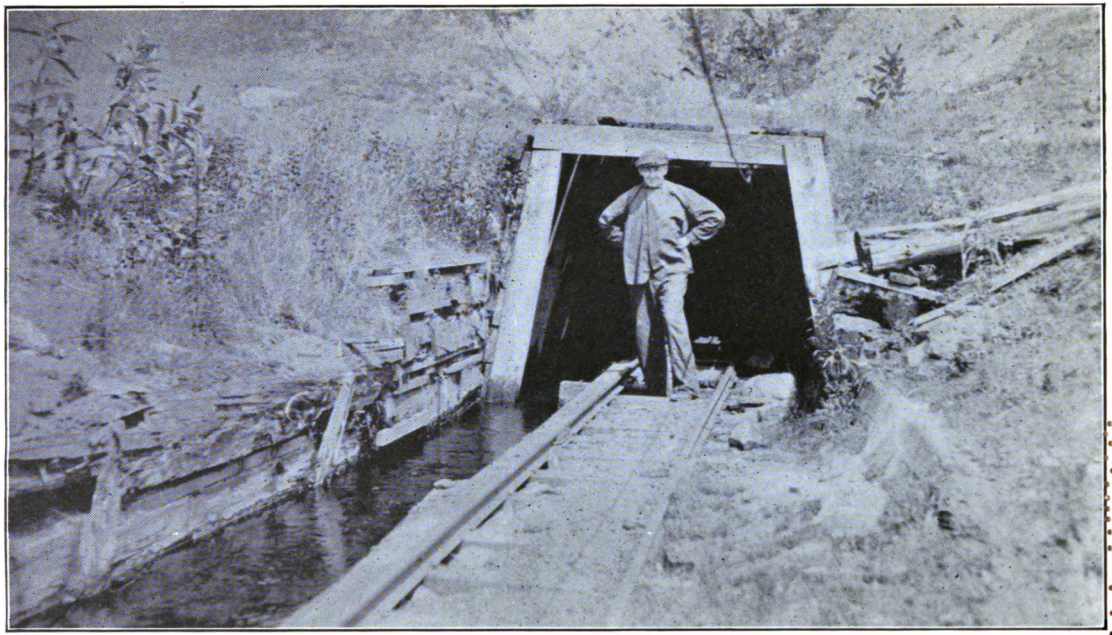

The entrance to the mine at Arnot, Pa., through which W. B. Wilson passed when going to and from work

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from 1900 to 1908, in the meantime, in 1906, having been elected to Congress.

The United Mine Workers of America is the strongest labor organization among coal miners. It started in 1890 with only a few members, but its growth has been phenomenal. Miners and operators agree that its success as an organization in advancing wages has been wonderful. Mine owners themselves also admit that it is managed by capable, conservative men, in a way that has proved as satisfactory to them as to the miners. This union does not insist that none but members shall have employment, and it uses no coercion to bring non-union men into the ranks. Colored miners are also admitted and even hold offices in the local unions.

Whenever possible, the United Mine Workers' Union promotes the formation of agreements between employers and employees as organizations for the purpose of determining wages, hours, and other conditions of labor. Joint inter-State conferences are held for the purpose, when occasion arises, which may be attended by any number of operators and miners, but in which each side and each State has a limited and equal number of votes. A unanimous vote is necessary to every important decision. If an agreement is not reached, the question is referred to successively higher authorities until the State officials of the United Mine Workers and the commissioner of the Operators' Association are called in. The national officers of the United Mine Workers are not often asked to help, and in many cases State agreements have been accomplished.

It is hardly possible to understand the great strike

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of 1902 without a glance at the previous strike of 1900, and some notice of conditions among the miners. The United Mine Workers was originally a bituminous organization, but by 1894 the anthracite miners began to come in and by 1900 the Schuylkill District in Pennsylvania was fairly well organized. After the revival of business succeeding the panic of 1893-1897, the pay of bituminous miners was twice advanced prior to 1900, while the hard coal workers were still suffering the conditions which the panic had imposed. The anthracite mine operators did not consider that it would be a fair thing to raise the wages of their workmen as the bituminous owners had done, and the anthracite miners became more and more discontented.

In August, 1900, therefore, the officers of the United Mine Workers called a convention to devise means and make plans for a joint convention of operators and miners at some future date, to arrange for a readjustment of the price of mining and scale of wages, to discuss the system of docking and the practice of compelling miners to load more than 2,240 pounds of coal for a ton.

This convention met and issued invitations to the operators to meet the miners' representatives in joint conference. No notice was taken of this invitation. The miners' representatives then wrote to the national executive board for permission to strike within ten days. The board was unwilling to sanction a strike until every other means had been exhausted, and directed President Mitchell and Mr. Wilson to make another effort to bring about a joint conference. To their communications stating that a strike was im-

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minent and asking that the matter at issue be submitted to a board of arbitration, the anthracite companies made no reply. Then the national executive board ordered a strike to commence September 17, 1900.

A hundred and thirty-two thousand mine workers promptly laid down their tools on the day appointed, greatly surprising the mine owners, who had believed that their usually docile and obedient workers would refuse to obey the strike order. The contest continued two or three weeks, when one of the largest companies in the region posted notices offering an advance of ten per cent. Other companies followed with similar offers. The strikers called a convention, which voted, on the recommendation of a committee of which John Mitchell was chairman, to accept the advance, provided the operators would agree to continue it until the following April 1, to abolish the sliding scale in the Lehigh and Schuylkill districts, and to agree to discuss other grievances with the committee of their own employees.

John Mitchell's wise management of this strike was greatly appreciated by all classes of people. He returned to his office in Indianapolis assured of the high regard and gratitude of the people of the anthracite region.

Virtually all the anthracite mined in the United States comes from a small area of four hundred and ninety-six square miles in nine counties in Pennsylvania, there being only insignificant deposits in Colorado and New Mexico. Five of these counties, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Schuylkill, Northumberland, and Carbon, produce ninety-six per cent. of the total out-

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put. The other four counties are Susquehanna, Dauphin, Columbia, and Sullivan.

Conditions in the anthracite coal fields are different from those in the bituminous coal regions. The bituminous miner spends more time inside the mine than does the hard coal worker, and also at harder work. He frequently must dig lying on his side or even on his back, and usually finishes the process of blowing down his coal, cleaning and loading it himself. In most cases the anthracite miner simply drills and blows down his coal, leaving his laborer to clean and load it. He has to pay this laborer himself, usually about one-third of his own earnings, but even at that it was claimed by operators at that time that he received on the average higher pay than many responsible employees carrying the coal. Besides, this work takes only a few hours of his time, after which he generally takes an airing above ground; and he can work only when the breakers are running, which is usually but about seven hours and a half a day.

Of course, the dangerous character of the miner's work must be considered, and the fact that he does not have steady employment throughout the year. In addition to this, an anthracite miner must have distinctive knowledge and ability. He can attain proficiency in his vocation only by years of experience. As President Baer, of the Reading System said, in one of his letters: "In the anthracite fields a bituminous miner cannot be employed, whatever his skill." But his skill does not fit him for any other occupation. When in the mine he is a superior workman and has a right to demand wages accordingly; but if he leaves the mine he becomes an unskilled workman and can

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claim wages only as such. Besides, most mining towns are more or less isolated, so that, with no other industries present in the place, the miner has not opportunity to find other employment when he is laid off. As has been said, miners rarely work more than about two hundred days in the year, so that a living wage must mean more per day than if they could be occupied as they might be in a factory or other industrial plant.

After the settlement of the 1900 strike, when the miners received an increase of ten per cent., matters went on smoothly for a time, until the miners began to feel that, besides the question of wages, there were other grievances that should be settled. Accordingly at the thirteenth annual convention of the United Mine Workers, held in January, 1902, at Indianapolis, a resolution was adopted directing President Mitchell and the Executive Board to co-operate with the officers and members of the anthracite districts to bring about a conference between operators and miners. The United Mine Workers pledged themselves to aid their anthracite brothers with all possible assistance in case such a conference should fail and a strike be inaugurated.

Conventions were held in Scranton and Shamokin which voted to send invitations to the operators to meet them in joint conference, but the operators refused to meet the miners' representatives or to recognize the United Mine Workers' organization in any discussion of grievance. A statement was then issued to the public, declaring that the anthracite miners intended to strike "to secure their just and reasonable claims." Before inaugurating the strike, however, the conven-

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tion appealed to the Industrial Department of the National Civic Federation to use its influence with the coal companies to try to adjust grievances. President Mitchell therefore wired to Senator Hanna, then Chairman of the Industrial Department, as follows:

"Anthracite mine workers have failed in their efforts to effect settlement of wage scale, and have declared for a suspension of work, to take effect upon date to be designated by district officers. I am directed to appeal to Industrial Department of Civic Federation for its intervention to avert the threatened conflict. If you decide to call a special meeting of executive committee, kindly wire date and place of meeting."

In response to this appeal, three joint conferences were held, the third after an adjournment of thirty days; but these conferences absolutely failed. The operators refused to consider the demands of the miners' delegates. Still President Mitchell and Secretary Wilson were determined to avert a strike if possible. Under their influence, the executive board sent a lengthy telegram to the presidents of the coal carrying railroads, stating the case carefully and suggesting that a committee of five from the Industrial Branch of the National Civic Federation should arbitrate and decide any or all of the questions under dispute, their decision to be binding upon both parties and effective for a year. Further than this, they proposed that, if the first proposition were not acceptable, a committee composed of Archbishop Ireland, Bishop Potter, and one other person that these two might select, be authorized to investigate wages and conditions in the anthracite regions, and promised

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to abide by the decisions of this committee,—that is, if the committee decided that the anthracite mine workers received sufficient wages to enable them to support their families in a manner consistent with American standards, these workers would withdraw their claims for higher wages and better conditions, provided the anthracite mine operators would agree to comply with any recommendations the committee should make regarding wages and conditions of labor among their employees.

The operators declined to consider either of these propositions. Therefore, the anthracite miners ordered a temporary suspension to take effect May 9th, and on the following Monday 140,000 miners stopped work. Two days later a convention was held at Hazleton and the suspension was declared permanent. Of the 811 votes cast on this question, 461 1-4 were for the strike, 349 3-4 against, a majority of 111 1-2 votes, or 57 per cent. of the convention. Thus the great strike, in spite of the determined efforts of the great leader of the United Mine Workers, was inaugurated. This Hazleton convention also petitioned President Mitchell to call a meeting of the bituminous miners for the purpose of considering a sympathetic strike.

Following these instructions, Mr. Wilson, Secretary of the United Mine Workers' Union, called a national convention, which met in Indianapolis July 17. These were critical days. If this convention should call out the four hundred thousand miners of the United States, misery and suffering unspeakable would come upon the lives of many innocent people. Besides this, the public would place themselves against the trades union movement and the cause of labor would

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receive a setback which it would be difficult to overcome. Most people in the country were sympathetic with the anthracite miners in their efforts to get living wages and better conditions for themselves and their families, but they had no patience with a sympathetic strike which should call out other miners who had less reason to strike.

President Mitchell spoke very strongly against this proposed strike of the bituminous workers. He stated that he had never known of one solitary sympathetic strike of any magnitude that had been successful, but that in such cases the result had been ignominious and crushing defeat, not only for the branch of industry originally involved, but also for the branches participating through sympathy. He further said:

"It has been the proud boast of the United Mine Workers of America that during the past few years, since our organization became a power in the labor world, contracts based solely upon the honor and good faith of our union have under the most trying circumstances been kept inviolate; and in this supreme crisis a failure to live up to the high standard that has made our union pre-eminent among organizations of labor would prove a substantiation of all the charges and allegations made against us by our enemies, and would confirm, beyond the possibility of refutation, the specious argument of the anthracite owners that the United Mine Workers of America is an irresponsible and unsafe body with which to deal."

The convention very quickly voted unanimously that, since the bituminous miners had entered into a contract to work for their employers for a year upon the terms agreed upon the previous January, they

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were in honor bound to stand by the agreement. The American people applauded this decision and showed their appreciation by contributions as well as words. Gifts came pouring into the treasury for the help of the strikers in their enforced idleness. This money was wisely applied for the relief of the needy, whether they belonged to the union or not, through relief committees in the local unions.

In this strike the following were the demands made by the strikers:

Twenty per cent. increase in rates paid for coal mined by the ton; a decrease in the working day from ten hours to eight without increase in pay; and all coal mined to be weighed, 2,240 pounds always to constitute a ton.

The strikers claimed that miners working by the piece were often docked for impurities, such as slate, dirt, and rock, in their coal, that the rate of docking was too high, and that the men who fixed it were arbitrary and not just in their decisions. They claimed that cars supposed to hold a ton seemed to "grow" so that a miner would have to put in more than a ton to fill them. They estimated that, by weighing all loads of coal and increasing the miner's pay twenty per cent., the loss, usually considered between twenty and thirty per cent., would be divided. As to the decrease of the working day, they claimed that by this proposed change the miners would have work for two hundred and forty or two hundred and fifty days of eight hours each instead of two hundred days at ten hours each, and that this would not materially decrease the output of the operators.

It is only fair to state the operators' side of the

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case. They rejected these demands because, first, the miners' wages had been adjusted by the agreement of September, 1900, and they considered there had been no just cause for complaint since then. They claimed that weighing coal at the mines would mean the installation of plants for the purpose, which would add materially to the running expenses, and besides, they did not consider this practicable. As to the increase in the size of the cars used, the system was to pay for loss according to the labor needed to mine the coal in particular veins. If a vein was large and thick, a larger car was necessarily used, the cubic capacity of the car being decided by the nature of the working. With regard to the length of the day, they claimed that in slack times some men must be laid off, while running expenses continued, even though only about sixty per cent. of the capacity of the mines was required to fill orders. Besides this, the miner could work only while the breakers were running, so his day was not long. Some of the operators conceded that the men had a just grievance in 1900, but they added that an extra demand for labor found the men unwilling to respond, and that the work was often interrupted by picnics, excursions, and the like.

Meanwhile, the strike continued. Deprived of their regular means of support, the miners and their families had to depend on the relief given by the unions. Often this was irregular and insufficient, entailing great suffering, especially on the women and children. As is usual in places where a strike is going on, roughs and even criminals were attracted and encouraged by the lower class of strikers, so there is no doubt

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that to a certain extent lawlessness prevailed in some sections. The mining companies declared that a reign of terror existed in the coal field, and that most of the strikers were ready to return to work at the old wages if they could be given military protection. In response to their excited demands, the Governor of Pennsylvania ordered out the whole National Guard, consisting of ten thousand men, to protect the miners who desired to return to work. It was found, however, that a number of non-union men, considering the presence of the soldiers an insult, left off work and joined the strikers. A Citizens' Alliance was also formed with the alleged purpose of preserving law and order in the strike region. President Mitchell declared that the real purpose of this Alliance was to destroy the miners' union and to make useless the efforts of this organization to uplift the standards of citizenship by getting higher wages and better conditions of employment.

Judging by the liberal contributions of money that poured into the treasury of the union, the strikers might have prolonged the strike indefinitely, so far as they themselves were concerned. Months passed and no settlement was made. But winter was coming on, and the whole country would suffer if the miners remained idle. Business interests, of course, had felt the strain from the first, and unless coal were forthcoming great hardship would come upon the general public, especially the poor in the cities.

President Roosevelt determined that a way must be found to end the strike. He, therefore, sent telegrams to the presidents of the anthracite companies and to Mr. Mitchell, the President of the United Mine

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Workers, asking them to meet him at the White House. All those summoned were present at the conference. In his address to them, the President disclaimed any legal or official right to interfere, but stated that, considering the urgency and terrible nature of the catastrophe impending, which involved not only the miners but the whole people, he felt it his duty to use his personal influence "to bring to an end a situation which has become literally intolerable." He asked them to meet "upon the common plane of the necessities of the public," appealing to their patriotism, "to the spirit that sinks personal considerations and makes individual sacrifices for the general good."

Mr. Mitchell replied that his organization was willing to meet the operators and try to adjust the differences. If that were not possible, the President might name a tribunal to determine the issue and "if the gentlemen representing the operators will accept the award or decision of such a tribunal, the miners will willingly acept it, even though it should be against their claims."

After an intermission, during which each side prepared carefully written statements, the delegates reassembled. Mr. George F. Baer, President of the Reading Railway System, addressed the President, claiming that thousands of men willing to work in the mines were able to do so only under guard, that they were "abused, assaulted, injured, and maltreated by the United Mine Workers." He described the "reign of terror" in the coal fields, claimed that coal mined was dynamited by Mitchell's orders, and stated that he believed that, through the presence of the

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troops, the power of the law was gradually asserting itself and that order would soon be restored so that coal to meet the public wants might be mined. He declined Mr. Mitchell's offer to "let us work on terms he names," declaring Mr. Mitchell had no right to come from Illinois to dictate terms. He said the operators would continue the wages existing at the time of the beginning of the strike and would, at each colliery, take up and adjust any grievance, and if this did not prove satisfactory, would submit such grievance to the Court of Common Pleas in said district for final determination.

Mr. Mitchell reiterated his suggestion that the matter be referred to a tribunal appointed by the President. Other railroad presidents and representatives corroborated Mr. Baer's remarks as to the lawlessness in the coal regions. Mr. Mitchell declared that much of these reports was untrue. Instead of twenty murders, as stated, he claimed that there had been only seven, three of which were committed by the coal and iron police. He frankly admitted that there had been lawlessness, but claimed that a large portion of such lawlessness had been caused by criminals brought into the coal regions to recruit the coal and iron police. He closed his statement with the remark: "I want to say, Mr. President, that I feel keenly the attacks made on me and my people; but I came here with the intention of doing nothing and saying nothing that would prevent a reconciliation."

The representatives of the operators absolutely refused to accept Mr. Mitchell's suggestion, would not recognize him in any capacity whatever, in the settlement of the strike, and the conference adjourned hav-

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ing accomplished nothing. President Roosevelt was greatly disappointed, but not discouraged. He had made up his mind to find a way to end this strike and he wired Mr. Mitchell that if Mr. Mitchell would secure the immediate return of the miners to their respective places of work, he would at once appoint a commission to investigate thoroughly the questions at issue, and would do all within his power to obtain a settlement of those questions in accordance with the report of the commission. After conferring with the districts' presidents, Mr. Mitchell refused this offer, while assuring the President that he felt keenly the responsibility and gravity of the situation.

The mining companies had insisted, as Mr. Baer had stated, that the presence of the troops would end the strike; but the miners met in convention in October and voted that they would not return to work until the matters in dispute were settled by a board of arbitration, even if all the troops in the United States were sent into the anthracite coal field.

The operators realized that their cause was lost and told the President that they were now willing to submit the case to a board of arbitration, but that this board must be made up of members whose avocations they should name, and that no representative of organized labor should be allowed on the commission. Mr. Mitchell objected to the appointment of any commission that dictated to the President whom he should appoint and that discriminated against organized labor; and the President agreed with him. The operators after some discussion modified their views to conform to the suggestions of the President, and the following Commission was named: Brigadier General

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John M. Wilson, Judge George Gray, Mr. E. W. Parker, Mr. E. E. Clark, Mr. Thomas Watkins, and Bishop John L. Spalding; Hon. Carroll D. Wright was selected as recorder.

A convention was at once called, which recommended the miners to resume work at once, pending the decision of the Commission appointed by the President, as seen by the following letter:

Wilkesbarre, Pa., October 21, 1902.

Hon. Theodore Roosevelt,
President of the United States,
Washington, D. C.:

Dear Sir,—We, the representatives of the employees of the various coal companies engaged in operating mines in the anthracite coal fields of Pennsylvania, in convention assembled, having under consideration your telegram of October 16, 1902, addressed to John Mitchell, president of the United Mine Workers of America, have decided to accept the proposition therein embodied and submit all the questions at issue between the operators and mine workers of the anthracite coal region for adjustment to the Commission which you have named. In pursuance of that decision we shall report for work on Thursday morning, October 23, in the positions and working places occupied by us prior to the inauguration of the strike. We have authorized John Mitchell, president of the United Mine Workers of America, with such assistants as he may select, to represent us in all hearings before the Commission.

JOHN MITCHELL,
Chairman of Convention.
W. B. WILSON,
Secretary of Convention.

The striking miners, numbering 147,000, returned to work October 23, 1902. The strike had lasted twenty-three weeks and three days, and the United Mine Workers claim that it was the best managed

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strike that ever occurred in the United States, and that the inevitable lawlessness committed was not more than would have occurred had the mines been running full time. It was said to be one of the most orderly strikes that ever occurred in any part of the world, and stamped John Mitchell and W. B. Wilson as peerless leaders of men.

When President Mitchell was called in conference with the coal operators, he never lost his temper and paid no attention to their rude and insulting remarks. Even President Roosevelt became angry and rebuked their rudeness. Speaking of these conferences afterward, President Roosevelt remarked: "There was but one gentleman present, and I was not that man."

The extraordinary self-control and simple unassuming dignity of Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Wilson during these trying times advanced the cause of American labor among the American people in all occupations.

The President of the United States invited Mr. Mitchell to call at the White House without ceremony at any time he visited Washington. But he took these honors modestly and showed no vanity or pride, though gratified at the high esteem of his countrymen.

At one of the celebrations held in honor of the great victory that the strikers felt had been achieved, President Mitchell was called upon to speak. He closed his remarks as follows:

"The victory of the great strike belongs to the men who struck; but behind them were a great force, whose names never got into the papers. They are the brave women and children who endured the suffering without perceptible murmur—they deserve the

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credit. I desire to pay a tribute to the men, women, and children of the anthracite coal mines.

"I hope that this will be the last great strike; I hope there will be perpetual peace and prosperity. But I shall never advise our people to surrender their right to strike. I want our men to be better workmen than the non-union men; I want our people to demonstrate that union labor is the best labor.

"I wish the operators no enmity; I do not want them to be our enemies. I believe if they understood our lofty purposes they would meet us in conference, and the days of lockouts and strikes would be eliminated. I desire to impress on your minds and hearts that the only safeguard you have is your membership in trades unions. Bear in mind, if you are negligent and give up your union, just so sure the operators will make you pay for this strike."

The report of the Strike Commission was sent to President Roosevelt March 18, 1903. After preliminary meetings October 24 and 27 in Washington, the Commission adjourned to meet in Scranton, Pennsylvania, November 14. Before beginning the hearings, the Commission took seven days to visit mines for the observation and investigation of the general conditions under which the miners worked and lived. Every facility was furnished by the operators for a thorough examination of the mines, breakers, and the various machinery for pumping, ventilating, and carrying on generally the mining operations.

For the convenience of those working in the mines, the Commission heard all the testimony in behalf of the mine workers, including part of that given by non-union mine workers,—which was a protest against the dictation of the United Mine Workers in settling

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their wages and conditions—in the city of Scranton. Then they adjourned to Philadelphia, where was heard the final testimony of the non-union mine workers, that adduced by the operators, and the rebutting testimony of the mine workers. The proceedings were concluded February 5, and adjournment was taken until February 9, to enable the counsel to prepare arguments, to the hearing of which a week was devoted.

The Commission examined five hundred and fifty-eight witnesses,—for striking anthracite workers, two hundred and forty; for non-union men, one hundred and fifty-three; for the operators, one hundred and fifty-four; and those called by the Commission, eleven. An immense mass of testimony and statistics was compiled, including a long list of alleged riots, assaults, etc., especially among Hungarians in the Lehigh Coal and Navigation territory. At the close of the hearing in Philadelphia the Commission adjourned to Washington, to consider the testimony and deliberate regarding its findings and awards.

Summed up briefly, the result of the Strike Commission was as follows:

"They awarded an increase of ten per cent. above the rate paid before the inauguration of the strike; the right to employ check-weighmen when a majority of miners wished to have them placed on the tipples; that their wages should be deducted and paid through the office of the company; that no person should be discriminated against who is not a member of the miners' union, and made provision for a sliding scale of prices to be governed by the selling price of the coal. The awards were to continue in force until the first of April, 1906."

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CHAPTER XIII

Running for Congress

It was one Saturday night in August, 1918. I had invited a number of leading Wellsboro citizens to meet me at the Coles Hotel, Wellsboro, Pennsylvania. There were present Mr. Walter Sherwood, a leading attorney; Mr. N. R. White, Deputy Internal Revenue Collector; Postmaster O. H. Davis, Mr. H. H. Button, Mr. Harry N. Sherwood, Mr. John C. Bradley, and several others whom I cannot at this moment recall. I told the group that I was writing the story of Mr. Wilson's life, and had invited them to the hotel so that I might get from them some facts and suggestions. Of course they told me many pathetic stories about the struggles of Mr. Wilson during many, many years, and also of his most unselfish and kindly disposition through it all. But, having heard these stories before, I pushed along to more recent history.

Suddenly Walter Sherwood exclaimed:

"Well, Mr. Babson, I think we can best serve you by telling how William B. Wilson came to go to Congress. This, to my mind, is the great romance of his life. In this, he accomplished a feat which never was accomplished before, nor has it been since, the only other Democratic Representative in Congress selected from this district since the Civil War being my father, who was elected and served one term during Grant's Administration. Men, let us tell Mr. Babson that whole story about W. B. Wilson's campaign."

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The group seemed much delighted with the idea, and the rest of the evening was spent in telling me facts and incidents of that campaign which still stands out as the great event of the Fifteenth Congressional District of Pennsylvania.

The Fifteenth Congressional District consisted of four counties, Lycoming, Clinton, Potter, and Tioga, the last being the county in which Mr. Wilson lived. These counties had always been Republican, and the Fifteenth Congressional District was looked upon by the Republican leaders of Pennsylvania as one of their strongholds. Moreover, the Congressmen from this district had always been men of means. They had money to spend not only in being elected, but in taking care of their constituents after the election. They had been men who continually spent more than their salaries. To run against them was something that even men of wealth dared not do. Hence, for W. B. Wilson, without a penny and with all the great corporations in the district against him, to attempt this was beyond comprehension.

The Congressman from the Fifteenth District at that time was Elias Deemer. He was then serving a third term and was a candidate for a fourth. He was a millionaire lumberman, residing in Williamsport, the largest city in the district, and owned a great deal of property and had many working for him in his lumbering operations. It was said that it would be impossible to beat him. Certainly it seemed so. Deemer had a well developed organization in every one of the four counties in the district; in fact, he had two or three strong men in each of the voting precincts in the district, and had another

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corps of men traveling continuously during the campaign.

Mr. Wilson virtually faced the impossible, but he went at it with a will. He went from town to town, holding meetings and telling the people frankly what he stood for and what he would do if they selected him as their representative. He held many outdoor meetings and many meetings in grange halls and school houses. His simplicity of manner, honesty of purpose, and undaunted courage attracted many independent voters to his side, and notwithstanding that he had no funds to build up an organization or hire workers, he was elected. Truly it is a romantic story, how Wilson, a Democrat and a poor man, with everything against him, was able to defeat Deemer, a rich man and a Republican, in a strong Republican district. He was the first Democrat, as already said, with one exception, elected to Congress from that district since the Civil War.

Certainly it was a strong Republican district, for the Republicans not only controlled their own machine, but in some of the counties had a working agreement with a part of the Democratic machine as well. In fact, the Republicans of the district not only selected the man to run upon the Republican ticket against Mr. Wilson, but also attempted to select the Democratic candidate, who was defeated for the nomination by Mr. Wilson. In this way, Wilson not only had to fight for election, but also had a hard struggle to secure the nomination.

Notwithstanding the money and influence used against him, W. B. Wilson put up one of the greatest fights in the history of American politics. He never

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made a promise which he could not fulfill, nor a statement which he could not prove. He never spoke an unkind word regarding his rival, nor said a mean thing about any member of either party. He ran on a straight clear promise that if he got to Congress he would work for certain labor legislation, which, although thought radical in those days, is now taken as a matter of course. Looking back upon his speeches made during that campaign, it is most interesting to see how the opinions of a nation change. He was called then a dangerous, wild-eyed radical for asking for things for which the most conservative are enthusiastic today. Still, even in those days Wilson was preferred by the rich interests of the Fifteenth Congressional District to any other labor leader of whom they knew. This was very forcibly illustrated by a statement made during the campaign by Mr. W. S. Nearing, a prominent employer of labor, who said:

"Wilson is a constructive man, a friend of capital as well as of labor, and one whom no just man need fear."

At that same conference another big business man of Tioga County said:

"I will go one better than Nearing by voting for Wilson, although I am a Republican. For when all is said and done, Wilson has done more to keep conditions peaceful in these counties than any other man in the district. It is impossible to estimate the millions of dollars in time and property which he has saved by his conciliatory methods. Had it not been for him, this district would have been so honey-combed with trouble that the mines would have been shut

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down permanently and disaster would have come to us all."

He, however, must have been only one of many Republicans who voted for Mr. Wilson, because when the polls were closed and the votes counted on November 2, 1906, W. B. Wilson was found to have a majority of 384.

It was during the campaign of 1906 that Mr. Wilson was introduced to the people of Wellsboro at the Court House, which was filled to the doors. The closing paragraph of Mr. Wilson's address is well remembered in that county seat to this day. After stating the things that he believed in and his attitude upon the public questions affecting the farmer, the laborer, and the business man, and what he would do concerning these problems if they sent him to Congress, he closed his remarks with this statement:

"If the people of the Fifteenth Congressional District on election day see fit to send me to represent them in the halls of Congress, I will stand for those things which I believe will be beneficial not only to the people of this district, but to the great mass of the people of the whole country. And I promise you that if I am elected I will return here two years hence and render to you an account of my stewardship."

Two years later, during his second campaign, he returned to Wellsboro as he had promised, and again we find the Court House filled to the doors. On this occasion Hugh L. Kerwin, who was a resident of Wellsboro and the son of the shoemaker mentioned in a preceding chapter, was the chairman of the meeting. After stating briefly the matters at issue in the campaign, and the fact that Mr. Wilson was

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again a candidate against Mr. Deemer, his former opponent, Kerwin said:

"Two years ago on this same platform in this Court House William B. Wilson told you that if the electorate of this district saw fit to send him to represent them in the halls of Congress, he would return two years hence and render an account of his stewardship. Ladies and gentlemen, your Congressman, Mr. Wilson, is here tonight to keep that pledge."

The people of the district evidently were well pleased with the manner in which Mr. Wilson discharged the duties with which they had intrusted him, for they returned him to Congress the second time by a majority six times greater than that which he had received in his first campaign.

During this campaign Mr. Wilson fought on his record. He advanced no new theories, but simply told the people what he had done and what he had tried to do. Wilson was always a great believer in taking care of his trade, so to speak. He always had time to see any constituent and perform any service. No sacrifice was too great for him to make for a constituent. Furthermore, as soon as he was elected he looked upon every man, woman, and child in the district as his friend. It made no difference to him whether requests came from Republicans or Democrats, they received the best of attention.

The third campaign opened in the summer of 1910. The Republicans were then through with Deemer, and nominated Clarence L. Peaslee, a lawyer, of Williamsport. Again, however, Wilson was successful, with a majority of 3,000. This was considered by all a great and most wonderful victory. I forget which

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campaign it was, but it is said of one of them that his opponent spent $1.11 for every vote received, while Wilson's votes cost less than a cent apiece.

During this campaign of 1910 Mr. Wilson was a delegate to the British Trade Conference, and was there while all but three weeks of his campaign was going on. This of itself was a most remarkable thing. In the previous campaigns it was said that he was successful through his campaigning and personality. But the campaign of 1910 showed that he was successful because so many people loved and trusted him. Although far away in England, without power to campaign or take care of his own interests at home, he still won in a Republican district over a Republican candidate by about 3,000 votes.

Mr. Wilson had one advantage, namely, that he had the following both of the wage workers and the farmers. He was a member both of the Mine Workers' Union and of the Grange. It was his interest in farming that made him so ready to work for good roads. Not only did he believe in bringing the wage worker and employer together, but also in bringing together the producer and the consumer. Mr. Wilson always wanted to bring people together, in order to increase production, reduce waste, and make life easier. He believed that almost everything in life is a question of understanding. "So long as there is understanding," he has often said to me, "there is peace; but when understanding is lacking, then the germs of trouble take root and grow."

Wilson's last campaign was in 1912. Edgar R. Kiess, an insurance man, was the Republican nominee, and was also on the Progressive ticket—Mr. Roosevelt

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carrying the district by a large majority. Although Wilson was defeated, this was, to my mind, his greatest campaign and in fact his greatest victory. He received a total of more votes than he had received in the election of 1910 when he won, but Mr. Kiess received 568 more than he did, the respective figures being: Wilson 13,643; Kiess 14,211; the socialist candidate 2,282; and the prohibition candidate 814. Wilson has always been opposed to socialism. For some years there had been a strong socialistic movement developing throughout this mining region. Wilson had continually talked to these people and tried to show them that it is impossible for men to pull themselves up by their boot straps and that only through greater production can we ultimately secure greater benefits.

The Socialists, however, refused to listen to Wilson's kindly advice. During his entire three terms they worked diligently to build up a party, and in 1912 they had a strong organization. Hence, when Wilson began his campaign in 1912, he had not only the Republicans and a large number of employers against him, but also this socialistic group. Yet he was defeated by only 500 votes, although the socialists polled about 2,000. As he went about campaigning, he would appeal for greater consideration for labor and the wage worker, whose welfare he believed to be the basis of prosperity, but he would always remind the wage worker that if nothing were produced there would be nothing to divide. In looking over the newspapers of those days which reported the campaign, I find such statements as these:

"The Socialists claim that labor should have the

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full social value of its product. I believe this; but let me ask how can this social value be determined except by negotiating? Let us take a pair of shoes for an illustration. We will grant that labor is entitled to its full social value and for argument's sake is entitled to the whole pair of shoes. But granting such, to whom shall we give the pair of shoes? Certainly not to the men and women in the shoe factory. The tanners of the leather must be considered; the raisers of the hide should not be forgotten; the farmers who feed the cattle are worthy of their hire. Then, can we ignore the trainmen who transport the cattle and the hides and the shoes themselves? It is well enough to say that labor should have the full social value of its product; but when one attempts to apply this, he finds himself up against great practical difficulties.

"If we knew that each man contributed the same proportion of labor to the pair of shoes; if we could correctly measure and balance manual labor and brain labor; if we could fairly consider the part which capital plays, and certainly it plays some part, then we might be able to adopt the socialistic program. A little thought, however, shows us clearly that all these things are impossible to determine. And a thousand years from today they will still be undetermined. Hence the pathway is simple; we all must seek to increase production, for only by making more shoes shall we all get more shoes; then we shall sit peacefully around a table and negotiate as to how the product of those shoes shall be divided."

In talking with men who were in Congress with Mr. Wilson, it has been a pleasure to note how they

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all respected him. Republicans and Democrats alike all have a good word to say for his honesty, industry, good judgment, and fairness. Even ultra-conservatives like "Uncle Joe" Cannon, who fought him continually on all measures, had the greatest respect for him personally.

During Mr. Wilson's first and second terms Mr. Cannon was speaker of the House. Naturally, under a conservative Republican like Mr. Cannon, Mr. Wilson did not receive very good committee appointments. The two committees on which he served were the Patents Committee and the Census Committee. Still, those committees had considerable important work at that time. The Patents Committee revamped the Copyright Law, and the Census Committee had charge of the great 1910 Census.

During Mr. Wilson's third term Hon. Champ Clark was Speaker of the House, the Democrats having come into control. Mr. Wilson was immediately made Chairman of the Labor Committee, and was also put on the Committee on Mines and Mining and the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries. On all of these he performed most conscientious service, rarely missing a meeting.

It was especially fortunate for Mr. Wilson that the Democrats came into power when they did, for he waged the campaign of 1910 on Cannonism. He showed the people, not only of his district, but of the country, the danger of Cannon's arbitrary control of Congress in the interests of a small group. Mr. Wilson would say in his speeches:

"Although this country is a republic, it is so only in name, unless the people rise and take control.

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There can be less democracy in a republic in which the people leave the control to a small group than in a monarchy in which the people are alive to the issues of the day. There is nothing in names or systems. Our future depends on each of us keeping ourselves interested in government and the people who represent us. Unless this flame of patriotism continues to burn in the hearts of all of our people, the nation may become a republic only in name."

William B. Wilson thought he was through with politics in 1912, but a strong movement developed in 1914 and again in 1918 to make him Governor of Pennsylvania. It was only the active interference of President Wilson that prevented W. B. Wilson from being nominated in the former year. When the delegation came to Washington urging the President to release him from the office of Secretary of Labor, President Wilson replied:

"Gentlemen, you can much more easily find a suitable candidate for the Governorship of Pennsylvania than I can find a suitable candidate for the office of Secretary of Labor."

It is generally known that Secretary Wilson was not a very good campaigner for himself, as he never asked men to vote for him. Owing to his extremely diffident and modest nature, it was impossible for him to do this. From my experience in Washington, however, I think he was perhaps a most successful campaigner. Certainly this was indicated by his three successive victories in a Republican stronghold. But people in his own district insist on telling stories of how in his own campaigns he often devoted virtually all of his efforts to helping others.

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This was most interestingly illustrated at a meeting at the Proctor-Ellison Company's tannery at Elkland, Pennsylvania, during the campaign of 1912. Several of the foremen and officials, being very fond of Mr. Wilson, urged him to come out and meet the men at the close of the working day. With Mr. Wilson was Hon. Robert W. Hilton, who was running for State Senator from the Twenty-fifth Senatorial District. Mr. Wilson and Mr. Hilton shook hands with all the men as they filed by and were presented by the foreman. As each one was introduced to Mr. Wilson, he would immediately turn and introduce him to Mr. Hilton, telling him of Mr. Hilton's good qualities and urging him to vote for Mr. Hilton as State Senator. As Mr. Hilton was elected and Mr. Wilson defeated, many would say that this was very poor campaigning on Mr. Wilson's part; but others believe that his success in the preceding campaigns was due to this spirit of unselfishness.

Certainly it was this in Mr. Wilson's makeup that caused James Kerr, a big coal operator in central Pennsylvania, during Mr. Wilson's first campaign, to get out of his sick bed to pay tribute at a public meeting to W. B. Wilson's great fairness. At that time Mr. Kerr said:

"I have such confidence in Mr. Wilson that I am willing to open my books to him and leave absolutely to his judgment what wages should be paid to my men."

Although many of the so-called shrewd politicians blame his defeat to this spirit of fairness, yet these very qualities caused President Wilson to select him as the first Secretary of Labor. The President made

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no mistake, for when Mr. Wilson was chosen to the post the new secretary made this statement:

"Many wage earners have a natural prejudice against the employer class; and many employers have such a prejudice against wage workers, especially when organized. But the Department of Labor should have no prejudice against either class; furthermore, we should do all we can to remove this prejudice from both sides.

"Although the specific work of the Department of Labor is to improve the condition of the wage worker, as it is the duty of the Department of Agriculture to help the interests of the agriculturist, and of the Department of Commerce to help the commercial interests, yet we must never get labor anything that is out of line with justice. The prosperity of labor is fundamentally based upon the prosperity of the nation as a whole. In order that any group may permanently progress, all groups must have justice. Our work is to help the wage workers; but we must help them along sound lines and in a way that will not bring about a detrimental reaction."

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CHAPTER XIV

Six Years in Congress

W. B. Wilson took his seat in the House of Representatives December 7, 1908, at the opening of the Sixtieth Congress, the first Democratic Representative from the Fifteenth District in Pennsylvania since the Civil War. He had promised his friends the laboring men that he would do all he could for them, and from the first he had it in his mind to promote the foundation of a Department of Labor, which would protect the interests of Labor as the Department of Agriculture looks after the interests of the farmer, and other departments help other occupations.

In looking over the records of Congressional doings, it is interesting to note how many times W. B. Wilson introduced "A bill to increase the pension of" some one. It seems he found that many people who deserved pensions or an increase had been altogether neglected by his predecessor, so he made it his business to see that they received justice, and were treated as others had been in receiving relief or additional pensions. He was approachable, and no one asked him a favor which he did not grant, if, after consideration, he found that it was a just demand.

As a miner, he had of course known of the great many dangers that beset the life of one who goes down to get out the fuel of the world. Naturally, then, when he came to a position where it was possible to have action taken for the protection of these underground

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workers, he thought of them. In this first term in Congress he introduced a bill to appoint a committee to investigate mining disasters. In the discussion of this bill he brought out the fact that in no country in the world is mining carried on under as favorable conditions as in the United States. There is no country where the per diem production is greater, no country where the workmen are of as high a grade of intelligence, and yet no country where mortality in the mines is as great as with us.

Out of the appointment of this committee to investigate the causes of mining disasters grew the founding of the Bureau of Mines and Mining. It was argued by some that, since such a committee had been appointed, there was no need to go farther and add to the departments and bureaus of the Government. The Geological Survey could attend to the development and discovery of new minerals as it had been doing. The committee reporting on this bill for a Bureau of Mines wanted a Department of Mines, and were obliged to be satisfied with the Bureau, as a part of the Department of the Interior.

In the discussion Mr. Wilson took a prominent part. He said that in the seventeen years from 1890 to 1906, the number of men killed in the coal mines of the United States was 22,840; 701 were killed in 1890 and 2,061 in 1906. In Belgium in 1906 less than a third as many lives were lost; yet Belgium has the deepest mines in existence, with the most dangerous gases, known everywhere as the most hazardous for workmen. In other countries, where greater dangers exist, there was far less loss of life than in the United States. Belgium, France, Germany, and Great Brit-

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ain have bureaus which investigate into the conditions existing in the mines, experiment as to the causes which create the conditions, and endeavor to protect the lives of the miners.

In each of the United States where mining is carried on there are laws requiring a system of mine inspection, adequate systems of ventilation, and a certain minimum of air supplied for each man engaged in a particular mine; but in spite of this terrible accidents occur, and often it is impossible to trace the causes. In Pennsylvania and some other States the law requires that men in charge of mines should pass examinations showing that they are qualified to oversee such work; but often, in investigating the cause of an accident, the courts hold that the employer, having employed a man certified by the State to be competent, is relieved from responsibility for any result of accident.

A Congressman asked Mr. Wilson, in the course of debate, if he did not think the dangers to miners might be lessened if employers were held strictly responsible for all risks incident to the service in mines. Mr. Wilson agreed that it would do much toward reducing the mortality in mines, but, with his customary tolerance and sense of justice, he added: "I take it that no gentleman will assert that the coal operators or other employers deliberately create conditions in the mines by which the lives and health of their employees are endangered. If they do, it is through lack of knowledge as to what creates the dangerous conditions."

The bill states the object of the Bureau of Mines to be "to foster, promote, and develop the mining

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industries of the United States, to make diligent investigation of the methods of mining, the safety of miners, the possible improvement of conditions under which mining operations are carried on, the treatment of ores, the use of explosives and electricity, the prevention of accidents, the value of mineral products and markets for the same, and of other matters pertinent to said industries."

This was to benefit all kinds of mining, and one of the arguments in its favor was that it would have to do with the developing and producing of the rarer minerals, such as radium, platinum, vanardium, etc. It would also study plans to utilize the great quantities of inferior ore, discarded and wasted in the dumps of mines. So far from benefiting only great corporations, as some of its opposers claimed, such a Bureau would be of great help to the many small mining companies and miners in many sections. The Federal Government could make more complete investigation than the several States, having greater facilities for the work.

Many mining unions and congresses approved the founding of the new Bureau, and in many States messages were sent to Congress urging the passage of the bill. The mining industry is second only to agriculture in producing the wealth of the nation, and should have a body whose duty it should be to attend to its interests. The Department of Agriculture protects the grain, cotton, cattle, fruit, and other producers; the Department of Commerce and Labor had a Bureau of Manufactures, so that the founding of a Bureau of Mines would not be establishing a

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precedent for the protection of any one line of industry.

Mr. Wilson stated that miners are an intelligent and courageous class of men, showing great bravery in going to the rescue of their fellow men in time of accident. He said:

"Tell me in martial measures of the charge of the Light Brigade; point with patriotic pride to the farmers who fought with the soldiers at Concord and Bunker Hill; repeat to me the great story of the conflict between the Blue and the Gray, when the 'flower of American youth yielded up their last full measure of devotion' in defense of their respective flags, and my blood will thrill with patriotic enthusiasm and tingle through my veins in sympathetic response. Yet with all my admiration for the heroes of the battle field and their wonderful achievements in support of the rights of men, it does not equal my love, it cannot measure my devotion to those sturdy sons of toil who, uninfluenced by the enthusiasm of numbers, without hope of present reward or future glory, deliberately enter the dark and dangerous covers of the mines to carry relief to their suffering fellow men or perish in the attempt. It is for the benefit of men of this character that I appeal to you to establish and equip a Bureau of Mines and Mining."

When the bill finally came to a vote it passed with a large majority. Later in Mr. Wilson's Congressional life, when bills came up regarding appropriations for this Bureau and adding to its power, he spoke strongly in favor of providing ample funds for the work and increasing its usefulness. He said:

"The prime purpose of this Bureau is to promote

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the health and safety of those engaged in mining; but there is no reason why, in addition to that purpose, we should not now also empower the Bureau with the related subject of taking care of the waste that occurs in mining.

"You may take a crop from a piece of land and next year grow another crop on it; you may even take a crop of timber from land and in the course of a few years take another crop of timber from the same land. But when you have once taken a crop of coal out of the land there is no method known to man by which you can produce another crop. There is an enormous amount of waste in mines. What is lost is not only lost to the mine owner, but also to the entire community. There are places where the percentage of ore is comparatively low, so that it would not pay for working. The Bureau might find a way to mine it more economically, thus making a larger amount of coal available for use."

In February, 1912, Mr. Wilson introduced into the House a bill "to regulate the officering and manning of vessels, to abolish the involuntary servitude imposed upon the seamen of the merchant marine of foreign countries while in ports of the United States, to prevent unskilled manning of American vessels, to encourage the training of boys in the American merchant marine, for the further protection of life at sea and to amend laws relative to seamen and other purposes."

The loss of the Titanic had called sharply to the attention of the public the necessity for the use of life boats and familiarity of seamen with their use. This bill provided that a sufficient number of able seamen

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who knew how to manage life boats should be on every ship. Besides this, the bill aimed to give protection and fair dealing to seamen and sailors in the matter of contracts. Mr. Wilson held that, when any person made a contract to perform labor, and after having made the contract desired to cease from the labor, if he were compelled to continue it, that would constitute involuntary servitude. "If you can by law compel a man to work for one second after he desires to cease working, then you can compel him to make a contract to work for his entire lifetime, by virtue of his necessities. And that would give not a brief period but a lifetime of involuntary servitude," said Mr. Wilson, adding in a final appeal:

"Give us this bill and the 'free ship bill,' and you will have taken a great stride toward an American Merchant Marine. The seaman will be free, his condition will improve, and the American man and boy will seek a seafaring life in sufficient numbers to man all our vessels in peace or war. The commercial advantages which the foreign ship owner has had will be removed, American capital will find profitable investment at sea, and the American seaman, with his self-respect restored, will stand out as a model of seamanship to all the world."

The appeal appealed. The bill, known as the Wilson Seamen's Bill, passed the House.

It is not strange that the little boy who toiled in the mines of Arnot, wasting his childhood in the damp dark caverns of the earth, should, when grown to manhood and honored with power and responsibility, turn his attention to the great and growing evil of child labor. Mr. Wilson naturally gave much thought and

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attention to the Children's Bureau bill before Congress and strongly supported it in debate. The purpose of the bill was "to investigate and report upon all matters pertaining to the welfare of children and child life among all classes of people, and especially to investigate the question of infant mortality, birth rate, orphanage, juvenile courts, desertion, dangerous occupations, accidents and diseases of children, employment and legislation affecting children in the several States and Territories." Mr. Wilson summed it up as a bill "to promote the welfare of children and to devise means whereby the necessities of the parents cannot be used to retard the development of the children, who are the citizens of tomorrow." The bill passed. The Children's Bureau came into existence and was placed under the charge of the Department of Commerce and Labor.

For many years past there had been a great demand for the creation of a Department of Labor through which the great labor interests of the country might be represented in the President's Cabinet. In fact, the Democratic Party had in 1908 and 1912 pledged itself to the enactment of a law establishing such a Department. Mr. Wilson felt very strongly the need of such a Department, for the Bureau of Labor, connected with the Department of Commerce and Labor, had limited powers and appropriations. In his campaigns he had promised labor to do all he could to further their interests, and to him, the best way to accomplish this would be to put through legislation establishing a Department of Labor. In his appeal for the bill he said:

"There are in the neighborhood of 30,000,000 work-

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men employed in the United States, and notwithstanding that fact and the fact that the great bulk of our people are wage workers or farmers, there has been no representative of labor in the Cabinet up to now. . . . One feature of the bill is the section which gives to the Secretary of Labor the power to act as mediator or to appoint commissions of conciliation in trade disputes. Those who have had experience in trade disputes know that in their early stages, when the tension is not great, when both sides are in a receptive frame of mind, some one who has the confidence of both parties, acting as mediator, would be in a position to bring the contending parties together, and thereby avoid industrial disputes to a great extent—not entirely avoid them, but reduce them to a minimum.

"When a trade dispute is inaugurated is the time for a mediator to act. When it goes on until the workmen have reached the point where they consider the employer a bloodthirsty oppressor of labor, and the employer has reached the point where he considers the workmen anarchists and lawbreakers, there is little chance for conciliation. Both sides must go on until one or the other is exhausted."

Mr. Wilson did not believe in compulsory arbitration. This was not included in his bill, for he believed that then workmen might be obliged to work under conditions they thought unfair, and a condition of that kind is slavery. Or, the employer might be obliged to employ men and continue operations at a loss until his entire property had been swept away. Both conditions are wrong.

The Department of Commerce and Labor was

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created in 1903, and labor was disappointed not to have a representative in the Cabinet at that time. It was then thought, however, and brought out in debate, that the work might grow so that later it would be found necessary to have a separate Department of Labor.

The function of the new department as set forth in the bill is "to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners of the United States, to improve the working conditions, and to advance their opportunities for profitable employment." Even though not asked to mediate in labor disputes, it is the duty of the Secretary of Labor to go to the contending parties and endeavor to bring them together. Having used all his advice and influence in that direction, his power ends. He has no authority to compel either side to accept any decision or to enter into arbitration for a settlement of the dispute.

The second session of the Sixty-second Congress was a long one, extending from December 4, 1911, to August 25, 1912. A few days before that Congress adjourned Mr. Wilson made a long speech in which he enumerated the bills that had been passed by Congress in the session about to close, and made an appeal for working men to vote for the Democratic candidate for President in the election to follow in the fall. He alluded to the excise bill, taxing incomes so that the wealth of the country bears a greater share in the burdens of the Government than heretofore; the publicity bill, which enables every one to know before election takes place who are the contributors to the campaign expenses of their representatives; the parcel post clause in the Post Office apropriation bill, pro-

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viding for the selection of committees to investigate and report on definite plans of parcel post and postal express.

Among the bills recognized as labor measures passed by the House in that Congress were the various eight-hour bills applying to work done for the Government as well as work done by the Government, to dredge workers, to civilians engaged in the manufacture of ordnance and powder for the Government, to certain navy workers, to postal clerks and carriers. There was also the anti-injunction bill, to protect working men during the period of trade disputes and to give them the same protection in the courts that other men enjoy. For more than thirty years there had been a tendency on the part of equity courts to declare by injunction certain acts to be criminal during labor disputes that are not criminal at other times, and then to try men for committing these crimes without the protection of trial by jury. The passage of this bill "put the stamp of disapproval on such usurpation on the part of courts."

The Industrial Commission bill was to investigate the entire subject of industrial relations between employer and employee, with a view to ascertaining the best method of dealing with industrial disputes, so as to protect the rights of all persons directly or indirectly interested. Out of the condition of unrest prevalent in the country at that time and for several years previous had grown many strikes and threatened strikes.

"Strikes between labor and capital," said Mr. Wilson in defense of this bill, "are like wars between nations. They bring suffering, hardships, and priva-

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tions of every kind and character to those who are engaged in the disputes and to the community at large. Men do not engage in strikes purely for the amusement it brings them. Men do not engage in strikes for what they consider frivolous reasons. They know what is ahead of them, and are not prone to engage in industrial contests unless they believe they have very real and important grievances to correct which cannot be corrected by other methods. The purpose of this measure is to provide a commission composed of equal numbers of wage workers and employers, with a balance of disinterested parties, to conduct an investigation into the conditions which have created the spirit of unrest and report their findings to Congress from time to time, so that Congress may legislate on the subject if necessary. The province of this committee will be merely to investigate and report. It will not interfere with the work of the proposed Department of Labor."

There were also bills passed to protect the products of free labor from the competition of convict labor products, to make shorter the hours of masters and mates of vessels, and other minor bills for the benefit of labor.

President Taft signed the bill creating the Department of Labor during the very last part of his administration. In the session of Congress March 3, 1913, there was an interesting prophetic scene in the House. Mr. Mann of Illinois, speaking on the Wilson Seamen's bill, said:

"Mr. Speaker, one gentleman who has been most prominent in connection with this bill, both in the committee and on the floor, is a member of this House,

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who has been also prominent in other legislation which has been enacted by Congress for years, and I hope that we are saluting the next Secretary of Labor."

Another member promptly said: "I yield five minutes to the next Secretary of Labor."

Whereupon the Speaker announced: "The Secretary of Labor is recognized for five minutes."

W. B. Wilson was appointed the Secretary of Labor, and by many it is said his was the "big job" of the Cabinet. The new department took over from the old Department of Commerce and Labor the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, and the Children's Bureau. "It has power to act as mediator and arbiter in labor disputes whenever it is deemed necessary for the establishment of industrial peace. It can put an end to the slavery existing in many of the industries today, in mines and in lumber camps, and in the steel plants, where every alternate Sunday men work twenty-four hours from sun-up to sun-up. It can see that the law restricting child labor is rigidly enforced. Today over 1,700,000 children under fifteen work ten and twelve hours a day and sometimes all night in fields and factories and mines and workshops. It can decide whether government by injunction can be enforced always in the interest of capital and never in the interest of labor." Verily this is a "big job."

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CHAPTER XV

Creating the Department of Labor

Suggestions and proposals for the Department of Labor appear to have been urged continuously since the Civil War. They were so numerous and persistent over the long period intervening between the earliest of them and its creation as to indicate a steadily strengthening popular demand for some such act of Congress as that under which this Department operates.

In 1865 a department of the Federal Government with reference to the welfare of wage earners, and with a Secretary in the President's Cabinet to speak for them, was advocated by prominent labor leaders. Their suggestions appear to have been officially adopted in 1865 by labor organizations of that period.

Probably the only earlier proposal in any wise of similar character was that of a bill introduced in Congress in 1864 by the Hon. Gottlieb Orth, then a Representative from Indiana, for the creation of a "Department of Industry." Numerous formal measures bearing on the subject were proposed in Congress from that time forward during the following forty years or more.*

* More than a hundred bills and resolutions anticipating the present Department of Labor and introduced between 1864 and 1902 are summarized in pages 13-21 of the public document entitled "Organization and the Laws of the Department of Commerce and Labor," published by the Government Printing Office in 1904 and now out of print.

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In 1867 Congressional action was secured, but only on a resolution instructing the Committee on Rules to inquire into the expediency of the creation of a standing labor committee.

Some of the measures introduced in Congress, both before and afterward, were more intimately related to the commercial and business side of industrial affairs than to the wage-earning side. Others, however, distinctly anticipated the present Department of Labor and its principal functions.

Among the latter was a bill, passed by the House of Representatives in 1871, for the appointment of a commission on the subject of wages and hours of labor and the division of profits between labor and capital in the United States. There were also bills for establishing a "Bureau of Labor," a "Labor Bureau in connection with the Department of Agriculture," a "Bureau of Labor, with a Commissioner of Labor," a "Bureau of Labor Statistics," a "Bureau of Labor Statistics in the Interior Department," and a "Department of Industry." None of the bills was enacted. But several others of similar tenor and purpose, introduced at the first session of the Forty-eighth Congress (1883-84), were followed in 1884 by preliminary legislation in the direction of the present Department of Labor.

Among those bills was one in the Senate for a "Bureau of Labor Statistics," introduced by Senator Blair. In the House there was one for a "Bureau of Statistics of Labor and Industries," by Representative O'Neill; one for a "Department of Labor Statistics," by Representative McKinley (afterward President); one for a "Department of Industry," by

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Representative Foran; and one for a "Bureau of Labor Statistics," by Representative Lamb. Out of these an act was framed. As a result, therefore, of twenty years of agitation for a department of the Federal Government representative of the interests of wage earners, this act, approved June 27, 1884, created a bureau in the Department of the Interior by the name of the "Bureau of Labor."

That original Bureau of Labor was transformed in 1888 into an independent department by the name of the "Department of Labor," with a Commissioner of Labor as chief, but he was not of sufficient rank to be called into the Cabinet by the President. This Bureau of Labor, as it was again called, was placed in 1903 under the jurisdiction of the Department of Commerce and Labor.

Meanwhile, the original agitation for a Department of Labor with a Secretary of Labor in the President's Cabinet continued. In 1885 Representative Weaver introduced a bill for an executive Department of Labor with a Secretary of Labor. General Weaver's bill was referred to the Committee on Labor and got no farther; but during the next eighteen years several bills having the same or a similar purpose were introduced. At the end of that time substantial legislative progress was made.

In form these bills were of considerable variety, although their purpose appears to have been much the same. Some were in title quite like some of those introduced during the period preceding the creation of the original Bureau of Labor. Among them were bills to establish, respectively, a "Department of Agriculture and Labor," a "Department of Industry

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and Bureau of Labor," a "Department of Labor," a "Department of Agriculture and Industry," and a "Department of Industries." None was enacted.

During this second period, however, several bills of a somewhat different character and purpose were introduced which ultimately played an important part in the creation of the present Department of Labor. Whatever the title any of them may have borne, the object of all was a "Department of Commerce." These proposals for an executive department in the interest of commercial business being finally blended with those for an executive department in the interest of the welfare of wage earners, the Department of Commerce and Labor was created by act of Congress approved February 14, 1903.

For ten years thereafter the welfare of wage earners of the United States was consequently intrusted to an executive department designed to represent the interests of employers also. This amalgamated representation of interests that are at times in serious conflict proved unsatisfactory. An executive department, the same in principle as that which had for nearly half a century been urged in the interest of wage earners, was demanded with greater popular emphasis than before. After ten years, the Department of Commerce and Labor being transformed into the Department of Commerce, the present Department of Labor was created by the act of Congress on March 4, 1913, entitled "An act to create a Department of Labor." As Mr. Wilson was Chairman of the House Committee on Labor during the fight, he was very instrumental in bringing it about.

All functions relating more especially to the busi-

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ness side of industrial problems were by that act assigned to the Department of Commerce, while the Department of Labor was more especially charged with those that relate to the welfare of wage earners.

Formal organization of the Department of Labor began with the date of its creation, March 4, 1913, under the following organic act approved that day:

"*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That there is hereby created an executive department in the Government to be called the Department of Labor, with a Secretary of Labor, who shall be the head thereof to be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate; and who shall receive a salary of $12,000 per annum, and whose tenure of office shall be like that of the heads of other executive departments; and section one hundred and fifty-eight of the Revised Statutes is hereby amended to include such department, and the provisions of title four of the Revised Statutes, including all amendments thereto, are hereby made applicable to said department; and the Department of Commerce and Labor shall hereafter be called the Department of Commerce, and the Secretary thereof shall be called the Secretary of Commerce, and the act creating the said Department of Commerce and Labor is hereby amended accordingly. The purpose of the Department of Labor shall be to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners of the United States, to improve their working conditions, and to advance their opportunities for profitable employment. The said Secretary shall cause a seal of office to be made for the said department of such de-

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vice as the President shall approve and judicial notice shall be taken of the said seal.

"Sec. 2. That there shall be in said department an Assistant Secretary of Labor, to be appointed by the President, who shall receive a salary of $5,000 a year. He shall perform such duties as shall be prescribed by the Secretary or required by law. There shall also be one chief clerk and a disbursing clerk, and such other clerical assistants, inspectors, and special agents as may from time to time be provided for by Congress. The Auditor for the State and Other Departments shall receive and examine all accounts of salaries and incidental expenses of the office of the Secretary of Labor and of all bureaus and offices under his direction, and all accounts relating to all other business within the jurisdiction of the Department of Labor, and certify the balances arising thereon to the Division of Bookkeeping and Warrants and send forthwith a copy of each certificate to the Secretary of Labor.

"Sec. 3. That the following named offices, bureaus, divisions, and branches of the public service now and heretofore under the jurisdiction of the Department of Commerce and Labor, and all that pertains to the same, known as the Commissioner General of Immigration, the Commissioners of Immigration, the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, the Division of Information, the Division of Naturalization, and the Immigration Service at large, the Bureau of Labor, the Children's Bureau, and the Commissioner of Labor, be, and the same hereby are, transferred from the Department of Commerce and Labor to the Department of Labor, and the

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same shall hereafter remain under the jurisdiction and supervision of the last-named department. The Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization is hereby divided into two bureaus, to be known hereafter as the Bureau of Immigration and the Bureau of Naturalization, and the titles Chief Division of Naturalization and Assistant Chief shall be Commissioner of Naturalization and Deputy Commissioner of Naturalization. The Commissioner of Naturalization or, in his absence, the Deputy Commissioner of Naturalization shall be the administrative officer in charge of the Bureau of Naturalization and of the administration of the naturalization laws under the immediate direction of the Secretary of Labor, to whom he shall report directly upon all naturalization matters annually and as otherwise required, and the appointments of these two officers shall be made in the same manner as appointments to competitive classified civil service positions. The Bureau of Labor shall hereafter be known as the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor shall hereafter be known as the Commissioner of Labor Statistics; and all the powers and duties heretofore possessed by the Commissioner of Labor shall be retained and exercised by the Commissioner of Labor Statistics; and the administration of the act of May thirtieth, nineteen hundred and eight, granting to certain employees of the United States the right to receive from it compensation for injuries sustained in the course of their employment.

"Sec. 4. That the Bureau of Labor Statistics, under the direction of the Secretary of Labor, shall collect, collate, and report at least once a year, or oftener if

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necessary, full and complete statistics of the conditions of labor and the products and distribution of the products of the same, and to this end said Secretary shall have power to employ any or either of the bureaus provided for his department and to rearrange such statistical work and to distribute or consolidate the same as may be deemed desirable in the public interests; and said Secretary shall also have authority to call upon other departments of the Government for statistical data and results obtained by them; and said Secretary of Labor may collate, arrange, and publish such statistical information so obtained in such manner as to him may seem wise.

"Sec. 5. That the official records and papers now on file and pertaining exclusively to the business of any bureau, office, department, or branch of the public service in this act transferred to the Department of Labor, together with the furniture now in use in such bureau, office, department, or branch of the public service, shall be, and hereby are, transferred to the Department of Labor.

"Sec. 6. That the Secretary of Labor shall have charge in the building or premises occupied by or appropriated to the Department of Labor, of the library, furniture, fixtures, records, and other property pertaining to it or hereafter acquired for use in its business; he shall be allowed to expend for periodicals and the purpose of the library and for rental of appropriate quarters for the accommodation of the Department of Labor within the District of Columbia, and for all other incidental expenses, such sums as Congress may provide from time to time; *Provided, however,* That where any office, bureau, or branch of

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the public service transferred to the Department of Labor by this act is occupying rented buildings or premises, it may still continue to do so until other suitable quarters are provided for its use; *And provided further,* That all offices, clerks, and employees not employed in any of the bureaus, offices, departments, or branches of the public service in this act transferred to the Department of Labor are each and all hereby transferred to said department at their present grades and salaries, except where otherwise provided in this act; *And provided further,* That all laws prescribing the work and defining the duties of the several bureaus, offices, departments, or branches of the public service by this act transferred to and made a part of the Department of Labor shall, so far as the same are not in conflict with the provisions of this act, remain in full force and effect, to be executed under the direction of the Secretary of Labor.

"Sec. 7. That there shall be a Solicitor of the Department of Justice for the Department of Labor, whose salary shall be $5,000 per annum.

"Sec. 8. That the Secretary of Labor shall have power to act as mediator and to appoint commissioners of conciliation in labor disputes whenever in his judgment the interests of industrial peace may require it to be done; and all duties performed and all power and authority now possessed or exercised by the head of any executive department in and over any bureau, office, officer, board, branch, or division of the public service by this act transferred to the Department of Labor, or any business arising therefrom or pertaining thereto, or in relation to the duties performed by and authority conferred by law upon such bureau,

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officer, office, board, branch, or division of the public service, whether of an appellate or revisory character or otherwise, shall hereafter be vested in and exercised by the head of the said Department of Labor.

"Sec. 9. That the Secretary of Labor shall annually, at the close of each fiscal year, make a report in writing to Congress, giving an account of all moneys received and disbursed by him and his department and describing the work done by the department. He shall also, from time to time, make such special investigations and reports as he may be required to do by the President, or by Congress, or which he himself may deem necessary.

"Sec. 10. That the Secretary of Labor shall investigate and report to Congress a plan of co-ordination of the activities, duties, and powers of the office of the Secretary of Labor with the activities, duties, and powers of the present bureaus, commissions, and departments, so far as they relate to labor and its conditions, in order to harmonize and unify such activities, duties, and powers, with a view to further legislation to further define the duties and powers of such Department of Labor.

"Sec. 11. That this act shall take effect March fourth, nineteen hundred and thirteen, and all acts or parts of acts inconsistent with this act are hereby repealed."

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CHAPTER XVI

The Original Bureaus

Created by act of Congress approved June 27, 1884, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (at first called the "Bureau of Labor," then the "Department of Labor," again the "Bureau of Labor," and finally the "Bureau of Labor Statistics") was the nucleus for the Congressional legislation which culminated nearly thirty years later in the creation of the present Department of Labor.

When first organized, January, 1885, the Bureau of Labor was under the direction of Carroll D. Wright as Commissioner of Labor. By the act of its creation the commissioner was required to "collect information on the subject of labor, its relation to capital, the hours of labor and the earnings of laboring men and women, and the means of promoting their material, intellectual, and moral prosperity." Its policy was formally declared (February 4, 1885) soon after its original organization, in a letter addressed by the Commissioner of Labor to the Secretary of the Interior, as follows:

"It should be remembered that a Bureau of Labor cannot solve industrial or social problems, nor can it bring direct returns in a material way to the citizens of the country; but its work must be classed among educational efforts, and by judicious investigations and the fearless publication thereof it may and should enable the people to comprehend more clearly and

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more fully many of the problems which now vex them."

During the four years after its organization in the Department of the Interior, this Bureau issued four annual reports covering the information collated as required by its organic act. The act of Congress which at the end of that period made the Bureau independent of any of the executive departments, under the name of the Department of Labor, but without representation in the Cabinet, provided:

"That there shall be at the seat of government a Department of Labor, the general design and duties of which shall be to acquire and diffuse among the people of the United States useful information on subjects connected with labor, in the most general and comprehensive sense of that word, and especially upon its relation to capital, the hours of labor, the material, social, intellectual, and moral prosperity."

Under that act, approved June 13, 1888, the Department of Labor, as this Bureau was then named, issued 14 annual reports and 9 special reports, and between July 1, 1903, and July 1, 1912, as a Bureau of the Department of Commerce and Labor, it issued 7 annual and 3 special reports. A number of miscellaneous reports, many of which were made in compliance with the special direction of Congress, were also issued by the Bureau.

In November, 1895, the Department began the publication of a bulletin under an act approved March 2 of the same year. This bulletin was published bimonthly up to the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1912. Its general departments of information were as follows: (1) Results of original investiga-

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tions; (2) digests of State labor reports; (3) digest of foreign labor and statistical documents; and (4) current decisions of courts interpreting labor laws or passing upon any subject involving the relations of employer and employee, and the reproduction at the end of each year of new laws affecting the interests of wage workers, whether enacted by Congress or by State Legislatures.

The publication of the series of annual and special reports and of bimonthly bulletins having been discontinued at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1912, bulletins have since then been published at irregular intervals. Each number is devoted to one of a series of general subjects. Thus far these have been as follows: "Wholesale Prices," "Retail Prices and Cost of Living," "Wages and Hours of Labor," "Women in Industry," "Workmen's Insurance and Compensation" (including laws relating thereto), "Industrial Accidents and Hygiene," "Conciliation and Arbitration" (including strikes and lockouts), "Labor Laws of the United States" (including decisions of courts relating to labor), "Foreign Labor Laws," and "Miscellaneous" series.

As previously explained, the former Department of Labor became, July 1, 1903, a bureau of the Department of Commerce and Labor, its name being altered to "Bureau of Labor." Inasmuch, however, as no provision was made for any change in its general design and function, its work was continued along practically the same lines as formerly. The act approved March 4, 1913, establishing the present executive Department of Labor, which transferred the Bureau of Labor from the Department of Commerce and Labor

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to this new department, naming it the "Bureau of Labor Statistics," provides that all powers and duties theretofore possessed by the Commissioner of Labor shall be retained and exercised by the Commissioner of Labor Statistics, and this is the way the matter stands today. The office of Commissioner was held by Dr. Royal Meeker, one of the nation's most accurate and far-sighted statisticians.

The second of the four bureaus transferred from the former Department of Commerce and Labor to the Department of Labor, by the act creating the latter, was the Bureau of Immigration. Its function is to execute our laws relating to the immigration and deportation of aliens and Chinese, and it is administered by the Commissioner General of Immigration under the direction and with the approval of the Secretary of Labor.

Prior to the organization of this Bureau, the various acts of Congress regulating immigration were administered by State officials under the direction and control of the Secretary of the Treasury, the expense being defrayed from a permanent appropriation provided for by Congress in 1882 and known as the "Immigrant Fund." It was not until 1891 that the organization of this service as a Federal service exclusively was established. By an act of Congress of March 3 of that year the Federal office of Superintendent of Immigration was authorized and the duties theretofore performed by State officials under the immigration acts of Congress were transferred to inspection officers under his control. He and they, however, were placed under the direction of the Secretary of the Treasury, as the State officials who preceded them had

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been. The title of Superintendent of Immigration was changed in 1895 to its present form of Commissioner General of Immigration. Upon the establishment in 1903 of the Department of Commerce and Labor, the Commissioner General and his official force, then known as the Bureau of Immigration, were transferred to that department.

By act of Congress, approved June 29, 1906, the Bureau of Immigration was given charge of the administrative execution of the naturalization laws, a Division of Naturalization within the bureau was organized and the title of the bureau was changed accordingly to "Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization." But a separate bureau having been made of the Division of Naturalization by the organic act of this department, the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization was by the same act restored to its original functions, reinvested with its original title of Bureau of Immigration, and, though remaining in charge of the Commissioner General, placed under the general jurisdiction of the Secretary of Labor.

The Bureau of Immigration, like the Bureau of Labor Statistics, did not come under the jurisdiction of the Department of Labor until March 4, 1913. The Commissioner General during Mr. Wilson's *régime* was Anthony Caminetti.

Until early in August immigration was not far from normal by the standards of the fiscal year ended June 30, 1913, and June 30, 1914. Signs of extraordinary decline in transatlantic arrivals were then observed. Notwithstanding this and the subsequent decline, however, the Department was embarrassed by alternatives which the circumstances presented in the case

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of nonadmissibles. To deport was to subject them to the dangers of destruction or capture by belligerents on the high seas; to admit them outright would have been indefensible; and detention without limit would have involved unusual expense and much individual hardship. In this emergency the Department suspended all Atlantic deportations until assured of safety of transport. Meanwhile, in order to mitigate their hardships, aliens indefinitely awaiting deportation were released temporarily under bond. In the course of two months safety of transport had become general enough to warrant deportation by most of the Atlantic lines, and in this respect the regular practice was resumed.

For a satisfactory administration of the immigration laws, the character and condition of immigrant stations at ports of entry are of prime importance. So far, therefore, as the Department of Labor is permitted by law and equipped for the purpose, it aims to make these stations as much like temporary homes as possible. While regulation and exclusion, and therefore detention, are necessary in respect to immigration, it should be understood by all who participate in administering these laws that they are not intended to be penalizing. It is with no unfriendliness to aliens that immigrants are detained and some of them excluded, but solely for the protection of our own people and our own institutions. Indifference, then, to the physical or mental comfort of these wards of ours from other lands should not be tolerated. Accordingly, every reasonable effort is made by the Department, within the limits of the appropriations, to

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minimize the necessary hardships of their detention and to abolish all that are not necessary.

By Section 40 of the Immigration Statutes, enacted while the Bureau of Immigration was still under the jurisdiction of the Department of Commerce and Labor, there had been created in that bureau a Division of Information. Its purpose was to promote a beneficial distribution of immigrants and to furnish appropriate information to immigrants and other persons. Having been transferred along with its supervising bureau to the jurisdiction of the Department of Labor upon the creation of the latter, this division came under the influence of the broad statutory purpose of the Department. Its powers were consequently so far expanded by implication as to open the way for greatly improving its efficiency and that of the Department in connection with the distribution of labor.

From its creation in 1907 until December 31, 1917, this Division of Information engaged in the distribution of aliens and others in a restricted way under its limited powers. During that period it built up a distribution branch in New York City which has served not only its own purposes, but the purposes also of a model for the other distribution branches which the Department later established. This extension of Federal distribution work began with the latter part of the fiscal year 1914.

The State Labor Commissioner for Oklahoma telegraphed Secretary Wilson on May 25th of that year as to the possibility of supplying harvest help to his State. "We will need," he telegraphed, "from 12,000 to 15,000 men at from $2 to $2.50 per day, with

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board, to help harvest our wheat and thresh same; and 85 per cent. of the men so employed will be given employment in this State by the farmers in handling the various forage crops, which promise a big yield at this time, thereby guaranteeing from four to six months' steady work. The State will maintain free employment offices at Oklahoma City, Enid, Woodward, Frederick, and other points in the State to help distribute the men, and any publication you can give this matter through your department will be greatly appreciated by the citizens of this State."

Responding immediately to that telegram the Secretary caused it to be embodied in a bulletin—for display in Post Offices and publication in newspapers—which notified persons desiring harvesting employment to apply to the State employment offices named in the telegram. This publicity immediately brought similar appeals from Kansas, Missouri, and South Dakota. Thereupon the Department issued a further bulletin for display in Post Offices and publication in newspapers. It was the second bulletin in general substance (that with reference to Oklahoma having preceded it), but the first in the systematic plans of the Department to promote the welfare of wage earners of the United States in this way. From that the work grew to the great organization created by John B. Densmore, Director General during the war, with several hundred offices, over two thousand employees, and the most complete publicity service.

Anticipating the embarrassment, loss, and suffering to which unemployed wage earners have long been exposed by irresponsibly advertised opportunities, Secretary Wilson was careful to phrase the bulletins

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so as to put applicants on their guard with reference to wages, to the probable period of employment, to the character and circumstances of the work offered, and to the responsibility of the persons promulgating the call.

Another initial experiment, almost coincident in point of time, had to do with displaced factory workers. Having directed the facilities of the Division of Information to the relief of wage-earning victims of the disastrous fire of June 25, 1914, at Salem, Massachusetts, Secretary Wilson demonstrated his ability to assist wage earners thrown out of employment and made homeless by public calamities, and to do so without displacing or otherwise injuriously affecting other wage earners.

Favorably impressed with the results of both those experiments, which had terminated near the close of the second fiscal year, the Department began, through the Division of Information and with the aid of its supervisory bureau, the Bureau of Immigration, to organize public employment exchanges upon the national scale which it has ever since been developing.

The first step in that direction was to establish eighteen employment zones, with a public employment branch station in each zone under the charge of an immigrant inspector. In addition to these branches, sub-branches to the number of twenty-two were established in prominent points in each zone, and since then additional sub-branches have been established at immigration stations.

Evidence that private employment agencies engage in practices calculated to injure and defraud workers directed to employment across State lines was ob-

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tained during the year. On the strength of this, the Division of Information recommended that a law be enacted requiring all private employment agents to obtain a license from and to make reports to the Department of Labor, and that for any act of injustice to workmen the penalty shall be imprisonment rather than a fine.

In a previous report the Secretary called attention to the desirability of enabling the Interstate Commerce Commission to regulate interstate *commerce in explosives on water* as it is now authorized to regulate such commerce on *land*. The reference was to a dangerous situation at Ellis Island. The immigration station at Ellis Island was endangered by the commercial handling of high explosives near by. For nearly three years this had caused the Secretary much concern for the safety of the station and its occupants.

His feeling was first aroused by a destructive explosion in the winter of 1911 in connection with a transshipment of explosives at a railroad wharf. The explosion occurred at a point considerably farther from Ellis Island then the point at which shipments of explosives are now habitually made. It damaged the immigration station to the extent of more than $25,000, and would probably have caused great loss of life but for the fortunate fact that on the day of the explosion there had been no arrival of immigrants at the station. In consequence of this destructive explosion and of the fact that explosives are commonly transshipped within about half that distance from the station, efforts were made to lessen the dangers of those transshipments to persons and property on

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Ellis Island. The persistent efforts of immigrant officials on Ellis Island to protect the station and its occupants from the dangers they anticipated appeared to have been baffled.

Apparently this problem presented a double aspect. The menace to the Ellis Island Station was (1) from vessels loaded with explosives and sailing the waters of the harbor in that neighborhood or anchoring there, and (2) from shipments at nearby docks. As to the first aspect, vessels laden with explosives were reported as moving among passenger vessels in the harbor in reckless disregard of life and property and subject to little, if any, legal control. It seems that although local authority ends with the piers on both sides—the authority of Jersey City on the New Jersey side, the authority of New York City on the New York side—the Federal Government has done little, if anything, in the interest of safety on the waters between, except to require displays of a red flag and the use of particular anchorage grounds. Ellis Island was endangered by the anchorage habitually in its immediate vicinity of vessels carrying explosives. Some vessels so loaded are said to anchor clandestinely in that vicinity even now. The danger, however, is no longer as a rule related to those at anchor lawfully, unless it be in respect to the quantity of explosives they are allowed to carry.

As to the second phase of the problem, transshipments of explosives from cars to vessels at docks are made, as it would seem, perilously near to Ellis Island. Were a catastrophe to occur, responsible Federal officials could not explain their own inaction by referring to the vigilance, as it has been suggested that

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they may do, of local authorities. Such excuses, though usually accepted before disasters, are seldom admitted afterward. This consideration was evidently taken into account by Commissioner Williams. For, upon finding all other remedial doors closed, he advised that legislation covering the whole subject be urgently sought of Congress. Owing to the fact that he was once an immigrant at the Island, Secretary Wilson took great interest in it as in other immigration, naturalization, and labor matters, where human welfare was involved. Under his direction marked improvements in administration were undertaken at Ellis Island. Special efforts as praiseworthy and effective as they were unusual were made there to minimize all necessary and to abolish all unnecessary hardships of detention.

The third of the transformed bureaus was the Bureau of Naturalization. When the title of the original Bureau of Immigration was altered to Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, authority to administer the laws for the naturalization of aliens was vested in it. These laws, however, were placed under the special charge of a division of the bureau to which that function was particularly assigned. Upon the creation of the Department of Labor, the organic act, restoring the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization to its original name and purpose, raised the Division of Naturalization to the rank of a bureau, placing it in charge of a Commissioner of Naturalization, Richard K. Campbell, and under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Labor.

Prior to the act of Congress cited above, that of June 29, 1906, there was no concentrated supervision

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of naturalization proceedings nor any centralized record of naturalization. Frauds were consequently prevalent, and evidence of admissions, rejections, and nonapplication was often difficult to secure. Some of the inconveniences of that chaotic condition come to the surface occasionally now upon request for proof or disproof of naturalization proceedings prior to September 27, 1906. As to all proceedings after the act of 1906 went into operation, the records of the Bureau of Naturalization are complete. Whether any alien has since that time made a declaration of intention or not, or been naturalized or not, and no matter in which of the 2,527 courts over the whole United States that have been or are now doing naturalizing work, the fact can be conclusively and easily proved by reference to these records. And over the proceedings themselves the Bureau of Naturalization maintains continuous scrutiny. It investigates the circumstances of each application and submits to the courts on their respective naturalization days such evidence as it is able to discover relative to the merits of cases then to be decided.

For this purpose the country is districted with reference to the volume of naturalization business and its distribution. There are in all eleven naturalization districts. The largest by volume of business, though next to the smallest territorially, has its headquarters at New York City. It comprises most of the State of New York east of Auburn and includes Jersey City, New Jersey. The largest district territorially, though among the smaller in volume of business, has its headquarters at Washington, and comprises eastern Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia,

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North and South Carolina, Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas. Headquarters of the rest of the eleven districts, respectively, are at Boston, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Chicago, St. Louis, St. Paul, Denver, Seattle, and San Francisco.

Of course the Secretary of Labor cannot permit the Bureau of Naturalization to solicit or to urge aliens domiciled in this country to take the initial steps for naturalization. Individuals and unofficial organizations might properly do so. But the Department of Labor is an executive branch of the Federal Government, which endeavors to maintain friendly relations with all the nations of the world; and for this Department to permit one of its branches to solicit aliens to renounce allegiance to their own Governments might be reasonably regarded by those Governments as unfriendly on the part of our Government. For this reason the Department of Labor has not attempted to induce aliens to become Americanized until the aliens themselves have of their own volition renounced their former allegiance.

But when an alien applies in regular form for American citizenship, the relations between himself and the Department of Labor, and between his original Government and the Government of the United States, are thereupon altered. That he remains an alien for at least two years afterward is true. It is true also that he may be considered as still subject in some degree to his original Government, and that his original Government may be entitled in some degree to international courtesy regarding him. For his first application for American citizenship—his preliminary

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declaration of intention to become an American citizen—does not absolutely do away with his original allegiance. What he does in making application is voluntarily to declare on oath, two years at least prior to his admission to American citizenship and after he is eighteen years of age, that it is his intention in good faith to renounce his foreign allegiance, to reside permanently in the United States, and to become a citizen thereof if allowed by our courts to do so. Having made this declaration without pressure from our Government, he comes legitimately within the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Naturalization. For such declared citizens Secretary Wilson always has a warm spot in his heart, urging all such declarants for American citizenship to Americanize themselves to the fullest extent possible.

Secretary Wilson is of the opinion that he is bound to advise and to urge the declarant for citizenship to Americanize, to observe and foster the development of his qualifications with reference to the naturalization laws, and to bring him into sympathetic relations with such educational opportunities as are within his reach, from the time of his lawfully made declaration of intention until the declaration becomes absolute or the declarant is finally admitted or rejected by the courts.

The first notable mass meeting to welcome the newly naturalized, which was held in the Auditorium at Chicago on Washington's Birthday of 1914, was participated in by the Secretary. He aided a similar meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, on the Fourth of July, 1914. In the year 1915 he participated in a meeting of a like nature at Philadelphia, and had the Presi-

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dent of the United States deliver an address in person. The Secretary then held an Americanization Conference at Philadelphia, and later one at Washington, with reference to the importance and possibilities of public-school facilities for preparing declarants for their final applications for citizenship.*

This appeal by Secretary Wilson to aliens seeking American citizenship is probably the first ever made by the Federal Government with the direct purpose of carrying officially to the candidates a realizing sense of the educational opportunities that are open to them. It is also the first official effort to promote preparation for citizenship by aliens who announce their intention of applying for naturalization.

In so far as applicants for citizenship availed themselves of these opportunities the Secretary believed that they acquired a keener appreciation of further ones—better work, better wages, better standards, better family life, better community life, and a better understanding not merely of our Constitution and our laws, but of our history, institutions, and ideals.

To understand Americanization Secretary Wilson insisted that we must turn back to the Declaration of Independence, which breathed the breath of national life into our colonial federation. "All men are created equal and endowed with certain unalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the

* This convention was held July 10 to 15, 1916. It was composed of public school officials, teachers, and representatives of organizations interested in domiciled foreigners. Officials of this Department and of other executive Departments, representatives of the legislative and judicial branches of the Government, and professional and business men attended the convention and took part in its deliberations. The principal speaker was the President of the United States.

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pursuit of happiness." Not equality of height, or weight, or strength, or mind, or culture, or even of morality, but equality of rights under the law; and not equality of rights for some or for many, but for all. That sentiment, the lifeblood of American institutions, was profoundly stirred again by Lincoln in his address at Gettysburg: "Our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." But to sense the ideal of our national life is not enough. If we could understand Americanization, we must face the truth that even the institutions of this country are not yet altogether vitalized by its ideal. To make progress in that respect is our task and the task of Americans yet to come. Working toward American ideals is all our predecessors have done, all they could do, the best of them, and it is all that we can hope to do. This we must do, though, if we would regard ourselves, no matter where we were born, as having been Americanized.

What the future may bring forth is uncertain; but it is hoped that out of Secretary Wilson's efforts may grow a system which will largely relieve the courts of their heaviest burdens in the naturalization of aliens while securing better standards of Americanization among naturalized citizens than has been possible heretofore.

The Secretary also dreamed that the time might come when a public school certificate of Americanization would be accepted by the courts as evidence of the requisite intellectual qualifications for citizenship. In that event and by a slight extension of the practice this certificate properly might cover all the

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other qualifications; for who could better judge of the moral character and American spirit of an applicant than the public school teachers under whose tutelage he had been for two years preparing for citizenship?

Let it not be supposed, however, that Secretary Wilson was under any impression that alien applicants for citizenship alone needed Americanization. He was very far from thinking that facilities for improvement in the qualifications for citizenship should be thrust upon alien seekers for citizenship without being brought as freely and as emphatically to the attention also of the citizen born. It only so happens that the governmental machinery then available to the Department of Labor for promoting Americanization was limited to aliens who have declared their intention of becoming citizens. Moreover, the other work is under charge of the Department of the Interior.

The fourth of the older bureaus was the Children's Bureau. This was established by act of Congress, approved April 9, 1912. Its functions are prescribed by the second section of that act as follows:

"That the said bureau shall be under the direction of a chief, to be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and who shall receive an annual compensation of five thousand dollars. The said bureau shall investigate and report to said Department upon all matters pertaining to the welfare of children and child life among all classes of our people, and shall especially investigate the questions of infant mortality, the birth rate, orphanage, juvenile courts, desertion, dangerous occu-

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pations, accidents and diseases of children, employment, legislation affecting children in the several States and Territories. But no official, or agent, or representative of said Bureau shall, over the objection of the head of the family, enter any house used exclusively as a family residence. The chief of said Bureau may from time to time publish the results of these investigations in such manner and to such extent as may be prescribed by the Secretary of Labor?

The first chief of this Bureau was Miss Julia C. Lathrop, a most able and worthy woman.

Established as a result of the belief that the Federal Government should assist in the protection and betterment of children, by investigations and by popularization of useful information, the Children's Bureau was directed to investigate and report "upon all matters pertaining to the welfare of children and child life." As children under sixteen years of age constitute about one-third of the total population, and as the welfare of that one-third is intimately bound up with the welfare of the other two-thirds, it is obvious that its work has been unlimited.

The Bureau began by publishing bulletins,—the first upon the need of more complete birth registration as a foundation for all statistics of childhood; the second upon the baby-saving campaigns which are being conducted by cities all over the United States; the third upon prenatal care; and the fourth upon the number of children in the United States, with their sex, age, race, nativity, parentage, and geographic distribution. Several other bulletins, including one containing the results of the first field inves-

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tigation of infant mortality and one on child-labor legislation, followed.

Infant mortality recommended itself as the subject of the first field investigation, not only because it is a subject which is challenging the attention of the entire civilized world, but because it was practicable to approach it by studying one community of manageable size at a time, with the staff and appropriation at command. For various reasons Johnstown, Pennsylvania, was chosen as the community to be studied. Records of all the babies there within a year were copied, a schedule was prepared with a view to securing, not merely a history of the baby's life, but a picture of the social, civic, and industrial conditions of its family, and women field investigators were sent out to the home, where they obtained histories of the first year of life for 1,551 babies born in Johnstown during that year.

A review of child-labor legislation, containing a summary and the text of all the laws regulating the employment of children in the fifty-two political divisions of the United States, was practically compiled, including a study of the methods of issuing work certificates to children in use in the different States. The employment certificate is a method both of opening the doors of industry to the child and of protecting his life, health, and morals during his earliest years at work. The degree to which various systems actually give such protection is therefore one of the most significant questions connected with the child-labor problem.

It is obvious that the Children's Bureau has as yet made but a small beginning toward meeting the press-

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ing needs felt by Secretary Wilson, who urged its establishment. Much of its work during the early years was necessarily exploratory in character and much time was necessarily devoted to securing a staff and equipment and to organizing and laying plans for future work. It is believed, however, that the work of these years, as well as the vital importance and wide scope of the field assigned to the Children's Bureau, justifies a request for a considerable enlargement of its staff and for a considerable increase in its appropriation.

It was decided to call the second year of this country's participation in the war Children's Year, and to set forth a simple national program of child welfare, because the European experience plainly warned us that civilians must promptly understand that they have new responsibilities for a nation's children when its young men have gone to war. When President Wilson was informed of the purpose of the Children's Year, he wrote the following letter:

The White House,
Washington, March 29, 1918.

My dear Mr. Secretary:

Next to the duty of doing everything possible for the soldiers at the front, there would be, it seems to me, no more patriotic duty than that of protecting the children, who constitute one-third of our population.

The success of the efforts made in England in behalf of the children is evidenced by the fact that the infant death rate in England for the second year of the war was the lowest in her history. Attention is now being given to education and labor conditions for children by the legislatures of both France and England, showing that the conviction among the Allies is that the protection of childhood is essential to winning the war.

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I am glad that the same processes are being set afoot in this country, and I heartily approve the plan of the Children's Bureau and the Council of National Defense for making the second year of the war one of united activity on behalf of children, and in that sense a children's year.

I trust that the year will not only see the goal reached of saving 100,000 lives of infants and young children, but that the work may so successfully develop as to set up certain irreducible minimum standards for the health, education, and work of the American child.

Cordially and sincerely yours,

(Signed) WOODROW WILSON.

Hon. William B. Wilson,
Secretary of Labor.

Considerable financial embarrassment attended the initial work of organizing the Department of Labor by the new Secretary. The equipment and appropriations of the Department of Labor came over with them; but as their use was limited to the bureaus, respectively, they were not available for general departmental functions. For those functions the Congress that created the Department provided no equipment at all, nor did it make any financial provision. Until two months after its creation the Department was wholly dependent upon the generosity of the Department of Commerce for departmental quarters and furniture, and for clerical, messenger, and elevator service. Even the salaries of departmental officers were not provided for. That embarrassing situation was remedied as to salaries by act of May 1, 1913. But this act made no provision for subordinate clerks or for meeting other working expenses in the Office of the Secretary. In those respects, therefore, and in some others, the Department continued for some time

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in a state of dependence upon the Department of Commerce.

One of the first difficulties confronting Secretary Wilson was the problem of departmental quarters. The organic act permitted "any office, bureau, or branch of the public service transferred to the Department of Labor" and at that time "occupying rented buildings or premises," to "still continue to" occupy them "until other suitable quarters" were "provided for its use"; but no space at all was allowed for the office of the Secretary and its divisions. Partly to meet this difficulty, two rooms of the Bureau of Immigration in the Willard Building were set aside. But this building, then occupied by both the Department of Commerce and the Department of Labor, as it had been before by the Department of Commerce and Labor, was already overcrowded. The Commissioner General of Immigration, therefore, moved into extremely narrow quarters in order to make room for the Secretary. It was in such crowded conditions that the Department began its work.

This congestion continued until the removal, about the middle of October, of the Department of Commerce from the Willard Building to its new building at Nineteenth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue N. W. Even then the embarrassment did not end. Congress having assumed that the four bureaus of the Department of Labor could be afforded space in that building, which had been erected for the accommodation of the former Department of Commerce and Labor and all its constituent parts, only $5,000 for rent of offices for the Office of the Secretary during

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the remainder of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1914, was appropriated by the act of October 22, 1913. This was not enough for the emergency.

Occupancy of the new building by both Departments would have interfered with plans of the Department of Commerce, which contemplated occupying the entire premises to the exclusion of the Department of Labor and all its bureaus. Further embarrassment also arose. The leases which the Department of Commerce, as sole successor to the Department of Commerce and Labor, had acquired for the building in which its executive offices and their branches and those of this Department were quartered, ran only until October 14, 1913. There was danger, therefore, that the Department of Labor, with but $5,000 available for rent for the remainder of the fiscal year from October 15, 1913, to June 30, 1914—the amount appropriated by the act of Congress last cited—would be wholly without office accommodations.

This difficulty was finally overcome by Secretary Wilson through a contract with the owners of the Willard Building supplemented by a concession from the Department of Commerce. The former Department of Commerce and Labor having paid an annual rental of $11,830 for the Willard Building, the owners of that building agreed to accept from this Department for the remainder of the fiscal year (from the end of the lease to June 30, 1914), the total amount at the disposal of the Department for rent, namely, $5,000. Acceptance of that offer, however, would have accomplished little but for a concession by the Department of Commerce, which provided temporary

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quarters for one of the bureaus of the Department of Labor—the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

That the Department of Labor was created in the interest of the wage earners of the United States is expressly declared in the first section of the organic act, which defines its purposes to be "to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners of the United States, to improve their working conditions, and to advance their opportunities for profitable employment." This does not imply special privileges, but the inference is irresistible that Congress did intend to conserve their just interests by means of an executive department especially devoted to their welfare.

Nor is there any implication that the wage earners in whose behalf this Department was created consist of such only as are associated together in labor unions. It was created in the interest of the welfare of all the wage earners of the United States, whether organized or unorganized.

Inasmuch, however, as it is ordinarily only through organization that the many in any class or of any interest can become articulate with reference to their common needs and aspirations, the Department of Labor is usually under a necessity of turning to the labor organizations for definite and trustworthy advice on the sentiments of the wage-earning classes regarding their common welfare. Freely as conferences with unorganized wage earners are welcomed, official intercourse with individuals as such has practical limits which organization alone can remove. Manifestly, then, the Department of Labor must invite the confidence and encourage the co-operation

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of responsible labor organizations and their accredited officers and committees if it is to subserve its prescribed purpose through an intelligent and effective administration of its authorized functions.

While the Department of Labor sustains friendly relations with labor organizations, as in the interest of all wage earners and of the general welfare it ought to do, nevertheless this attitude must not be exclusive. Similar relations with unorganized wage earners, and also with employers and their organizations to the extent to which they themselves permit, are likewise a duty of the Department.

The great guiding purpose, however—the purpose that should govern the Department at every turn and be understood and acquiesced in by everybody—is the purpose prescribed in terms by the organic act, namely, promotion of the welfare of the wage earners of the United States.

In the execution of that purpose the element of fairness to every interest is of equal importance. Secretary Wilson made fairness between wage earner and wage earner, between employer and employer, and between each and the public as a whole the supreme motive and purpose of the Department. The act of its creation is construed by it not only as a law for promoting the welfare of the wage earners of the United States by improving their working conditions and advancing their opportunities for profitable employment, but as a command for doing so in harmony with the welfare of all legitimate interests by methods tending to foster industrial peace.

There has been no deviation from these principles. In no respect has the justice of the Department's

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position been so amply shown as in the case of its policies with regard to the right of wage earners to organize and with regard to the corollary right of collective bargaining. In the past the right of wage earners to organize has been conceded by some employers, but vigorously denied by others. In the case of many very large employers of labor the organization of trade-unions on the part of wage earners was a cause of dismissal. It was feared by employers who opposed labor organization that, if such organizations were permitted in their establishments, unreasonable and excessive demands upon the employer would follow. On the other hand, the experience of the Department indicates that in the past the most disastrous and long-continued strikes had occurred in trades and in plants where there was virtually no organization.

The fixed policy of the Department has always been to acknowledge the right of both employers and wage earners to organize and to use its influence against abuse of organization on either side. Upon this theory the Conciliation Service of the Department has always operated. Where both sides to a controversy have attained such form of organization that they can send responsible delegates to confer with each other, there has always been not only a possibility but almost a certainty of agreement. On the other hand, when wage earners are unorganized and there is no one to whom authority to speak can be delegated, it is evident that they can neither bargain nor be bargained with. Almost insuperable obstacles arise in such cases. The absence of organization means the absence of a medium through which the workers *en masse* can discuss their problems with their employers.

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The denial of this organization is the denial of the only means of peaceable settlement they can have. Whether or not so intended, the result of refusal on the part of the employing interest to recognize the right of labor to organize is to force the development of labor organizations of a revolutionary or even of a lawless type.

The war demonstrated that American patriotism is not restricted to any section of the country, or to any class or group of individuals, or to any stratum of society. The great need for sacrifice for the common good engendered by the war impelled both employers and wage earners to lay aside old prejudices, old suspicions, and old hatreds. Both laborer and employer did this in a supreme measure.

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CHAPTER XVII

Conciliation Work

The Department of Labor as an executive department devoted to the just interests of wage earners was established as one of the results of general industrial progress. Owing to well-known developments in production, the relation of employer and wage earner is no longer personal or individual. Theirs is now usually a relationship between groups of employers on one side (such as corporation stockholders) and groups of their respective workmen on the other. Employers act collectively through their own chosen agents—corporation managers, factory or mine superintendents or foremen, labor brokers, or the like—who, in hiring laborers, represent collective financial interests. It is obvious that this method of employment, generally necessary for success in modern industry, may give to employers great contractual advantages over wage earners. Unless wage earners also act collectively through their own agents, they are often at a practical disadvantage.

Employers who act collectively through their agents in hiring wage earners are often averse to dealing with the agents of wage earners who collectively offer their services. They desire to contract with wage earners individually. It is upon this point that labor disputes frequently spring up and become acute.

In most instances in which employers accord to workmen practical recognition of the right of col-

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lective bargaining which they themselves exercise, fair relations are maintained. Even under such conditions, it is true, unhappy disputes arise. Whether the bargaining be collective or individual, a conflict of interests may tempt either party to make exactions which the other cannot concede. If employers yielded to every demand of wage earners, their business would be wrecked; if wage earners always accepted the terms that employers offer, they would suffer great injustice.

In any circumstances, differences must be expected to arise. In such cases the Department of Labor, through public agents experienced in controversies of like character, might possibly find a common ground for agreement which the disputants, in their eagerness for advantage or in the heat of their controversy, had overlooked. Difficulties of adjustment would, of course, be greatly increased if either party refused to deal or bargain with the other. But the Department of Labor, from growing experience and accumulated knowledge and skill, might learn how, even in these more difficult cases, to appeal with pacifying and prosperity-promoting effect, to the good citizenship and the wise self-interest of both parties. And, though no common ground for compromise were discovered, the Department of Labor might still be able to stimulate such conciliatory spirit as might exist on both sides, sufficiently to bring them, each none the less convinced of the righteousness of his own cause, to a manly agreement to submit their unreconciled differences to arbitration.

In any of these three ways the welfare of wage earners could be fostered while the prosperity of

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employers and the peace and good order of society at large were conserved. Amicable settlements between the parties themselves without mediation are manifestly first in the order of preference. Mediation comes next. Arbitration third. But any one of the three is preferable to strikes or lockouts.

In his experience in adjusting labor disputes Secretary Wilson has demonstrated that they can be settled to the profit of all interests whenever both sides are fairly disposed, though they may have been widely separated in their negotiations at the start. These demonstrations have been made under greater embarrassment than the Department need be hampered with in the future. Properly equipped, it should be able to make mediation progressively popular with both the employing and the wage-earning interest of the country.

The possibilities of public service by such a Department are not limited, however, to settling labor disputes. Besides this work and the administration of the immigration and naturalization laws and of statistical investigations of labor problems and the problems of child life, much may be done in the way of modifying industrial conditions that provoke distressing controversies. With the sympathetic co-operation of Congress, the Department of Labor can effectively serve industrial interests, not only without injury to any, but with benefit to all.

Secretary Wilson was empowered to mediate in labor disputes, and in his discretion to appoint commissioners of conciliation, his authority coming from Section 8 of the organic act of the Department, the precise terms of which in this respect are as follows:

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"That the Secretary of Labor shall have power to act as mediator and to appoint commissioners of conciliation in labor disputes whenever in his judgment the interests of industrial peace may require it to be done."

Of all the functions of the Department of Labor which it is yet possible to administer, this one may be reasonably regarded as the most important. Suggesting with reference to labor disputes a development of diplomatic duties in the Department of Labor analogous to those in the Department of State with reference to international disputes, it points to a Federal administrative system for promoting and fostering industrial peace; not a peace of the Warsaw order, but one of mutual benefit and good will.

Primarily the Department of Labor must conserve in industrial disputes the interests of the wage earners of the United States. Not only do wage earners constitute in number more than a third of our total population, but in financial respects also their aggregate interests are vast. It is doubtful if any vocational interests represented in our governmental system exceed in volume or public importance those of the wage earners of the United States.

But though the Department of Labor represents primarily the wage earning interests in labor disputes, its ideal is to make its representation similar in character to that of the Department of State, which, while representing the interests of this country in disputes between it and other countries, does so with fairness toward all countries. Accordingly, the policy of the Department of Labor, though it executes its mediation and conciliation functions as the govern-

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mental representative of wage-earning interests, is to do so without partisanship or prejudice and with fairness to every interest concerned.

The powers thus conferred upon the Secretary of Labor must for the most part be administered through the commissioners of conciliation whom he is authorized to appoint. But no appropriation for that purpose was made by Congress until October 22, 1913, when a deficiency bill for the fiscal year 1913 appropriated the sum of $5,000. This appropriation, however, was limited in its disbursement to the expenses of the commissioners. Nothing for their compensation was appropriated until April 6, 1914. The urgent deficiency bill of that date appropriated the further sum of $20,000 for the fiscal year 1914, authorizing the disbursement of this amount for compensation as well as for expenses. The total appropriation, therefore, for the mediation and conciliation service of the Department from its organization to the close of its second fiscal year was only $25,000, of which $5,000 was available for commissioners' expenses alone and $20,000 for their compensation or expenses as might be needed.

Until the second of these appropriations—thirteen months after the creation of the Department and within three of the close of its second fiscal year—only employees of the Government detailed from their regular duties could be utilized for conciliation purposes, which was a serious handicap. A subsequent appropriation of $50,000 was available only for the fiscal year 1915, for the purpose of enabling the Secretary to appoint commissioners of conciliation and

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an executive clerk, and to meet their traveling expenses.

Pursuant to this authority an executive clerk was appointed, who, under the direction of the Secretary of Labor, systematized and superintended the mediation and conciliation work of the Office of the Secretary as completely as the appropriation for this phase of that service and the necessary limitations of a clerical function permitted.

The experience of Secretary Wilson in mediation work is most confirmatory of his suggestions with reference to collective bargaining that I have above outlined. In connection herewith he once said to me:

"Large employers are usually incorporated companies, with many stockholders of diversified industrial connections and with boards of directors having intercorporate affiliations. Often they are fortified with public franchises or other special privileges, and their superintendents and foremen—with whom alone wage earners have personal relations—are naturally sensitive to the industrial powers back of them. An individual wage worker is weak indeed as a bargainer with such employers. He must take what they offer or go without employment; and going long without employment means to the wage worker what hopeless bankruptcy means to the business man, except that it is immeasurably worse.

"We have but to visualize familiar facts in order to see what individual bargaining by wage workers for employment really is; we may thus see it as wage workers not only see it, but as they often harshly feel it. Consider the picture. A solitary wage worker faces a foreman whom he asks for work to do. Back

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of him a shadowy mass of individual bargainers eager for the job. Fronting him the foreman upon whose word his livelihood depends. Over the foreman a superintendent whom the foreman must satisfy. Rising above both, rank upon rank, managers, directors, stockholders, all to be satisfied by superintendents and foremen, and each rank subservient to the rank above it. The interests of all but the solitary bargainer for a job are knitted together into a collective self-interest which instinctively dictates for wages the least that the labor market will allow—a market tense with competition for work, but slack in competition for workers. Even this is not all. For that collective interest is permeated with similar ones through interlocked directorates and interlaced stockholding, vitalized it may be with gentlemen's agreements and by business coercion or fear of it. At the outer edge of all a lone wage worker bargains for work; bargains in a glutted labor market; bargains individually!

"Before those gigantic collectivities of employing interests a wage worker bargaining individually for work is as impotent and negligible as a mediæval peasant kneeling before the council of a king. Only if employment opportunities were unlimited could wage earners bargain individually with employment interests so unified. But, in reality, employment opportunities are limited—very narrowly limited. The fact may be abnormal, but fact it is, that although the need for labor products is constantly in excess of their supply, yet opportunities for producing them are somehow so few that work is seldom plentiful. Never, one may fairly say, is opportunity for work so far

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in excess of persons needing work as to give them more than a slight and very temporary advantage in bargaining, or even to place them for long on an even footing. While this unbalanced condition lasts the interests of wholesale social life demand that wage earners be freely conceded the right in bargaining for employment, to do so collectively."

Those considerations gave rise logically to considerations relative to the organization of wage-earning labor. The interests of the wage earners of the United States, regardless of whether they are organized or not, are represented by the Department of Labor. It makes no distinction between the two. Yet its experience tends to demonstrate the importance of labor organization, not alone to wage earners, but also to the public interests as a whole.

For collective bargaining purposes alone organization is indispensable. Without it the economic independence of wage earners would be impossible under existing industrial conditions, because workers cannot bargain collectively unless they are so organized as to enable them to bargain through representatives over whom employers can have no coercive control.

Through their organizations the standards of citizenship have been raised among wage workers. Through them the purchasing power of wage workers has been increased, making more profitable customers at the stores for the products of every vocation. Through them this purchasing power may be still further increased with injury to no legitimate interest, but to the benefit of all. While striving for foreign markets we should not overlook the market

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we have at home in the wage-working group, which constitutes more than half our population. Low wages lessen the purchasing power of that market; high prices increase it. This is no circle of reasoning of which it may be said that what the wage worker gets in higher wages he loses in higher prices. High wages tend to raise the level of pay for all industry, not at its own expense, but at the expense of the unearned profits of special privileges. The true sign of general prosperity is high wages.

Industrial peace, also, is conserved through established and fairly recognized labor organization. That this is so the mediation work of the Department goes to prove. In the cases in which labor organizations have been recognized by employers, mediation upon just terms has been much more easily affected than in the cases in which employers, though acting collectively themselves, have refused to accord rights of collective action to the wage workers from whom their employees are drawn.

The more cordially the principle of labor organization and the policy of collective bargaining between employers and wage workers are sustained by public opinion, even in opposition to the hostile attitude of what is happily a diminishing number of employers, the more effective for the general good will the mediation work of this Department become.

In spite of the difficulties that are always unavoidable at the start in administering new Federal functions of any sort, and notwithstanding the additions to these difficulties in the present case from delayed and insufficient appropriations, remarkable success

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attended the mediation and conciliation work from the beginning. By June 30, 1914, the close of the second fiscal year, being only sixteen months after the creation of the Department, the work had already made considerable progress.

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CHAPTER XVIII

Preparing for War

Immediately after the severance of diplomatic relations between our Government and that of Germany, February 3, 1917, Secretary Wilson proceeded to adapt all its appropriate facilities to war service. When on April 6, 1917, the issue of war was formally joined between the two countries, its organization had been so far adapted to this work as to enable it to assist other branches of the Government, and contractors under them, with growing efficiency and effect. Some of the functions so utilized were distributed among the bureaus for execution by them under the Secretary's direction and supervision. Others were lodged in the Office of the Secretary.

Among the bureau activities in connection with war work were those of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which gathered facts regarding war experiences abroad. The Bureau of Immigration, besides adapting its regular functions to unusual administrative activities caused by war conditions, assisted in the internment of enemy aliens unlawfully in the country, but not technically prisoners of war; and through that bureau's Division of Information the Secretary extended the United States Employment Service of the Department to deal with war necessities on the industrial side. The Children's Bureau undertook to conserve during the war those standards of life and labor, affecting children and mothers, which had been

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established before the war, and to promote after-war protection for both. The Bureau of Naturalization, in addition to extra work imposed by an unprecedented number of applications for naturalization induced by war conditions, gave attention to securing naturalization rights to unnaturalized declarants who entered the military service of the country.

Through the office of the Secretary the industrial relations of workingmen to the war were administered by means of the United States Employment Service under the general powers of the Department to conserve the interests of wage earners, and by means of the Division of Conciliation under the specific power of the Secretary to act as mediator in labor disputes.

Mediation of labor disputes calling for Government mediation increased suddenly and enormously with the beginning of the war. A majority of the employers and employees involved in industrial controversies evinced a keen desire to secure the good offices of the Department of Labor through its conciliators, and to take advantage of the machinery created under that section of the organic law of the Department, the purpose of which in this field of its activities had been the fostering of industrial peace on a basis of industrial justice. During the four years' existence of the Division of Conciliation, a method was developed for assisting in the quick adjustment of such disputes. It had been demonstrated that the intervention of an impartial third party in the person of a conciliator by the Department invariably expedited the settlement of a dispute which had culminated in a strike or lockout. In a large number of instances the conciliators were able

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not only to bring about agreement in cases of existing difference—often arising from misunderstanding—but to avert the threatened strike altogether.

Requests for conciliators came to the Secretary from governmental agencies as well as from unofficial employers and employees. These applications increased fourfold in an amazingly brief period following the declaration of war. The encouraging element developed in almost all these controversies was the sincere desire evidenced on all sides not to proceed to such extremes as would result in an embarrassment to the Government. The Department's representatives fostered this spirit to the utmost, and thus were able to render vital services at a critical time.

The excellent work of the conciliators in this respect stimulated requests for the good offices of the Secretary in constantly increasing numbers. It was not unusual to receive separate appeals from the employers and employees at the same plant or industry, nor was it at all uncommon for the Department to receive a joint request to assign a representative to settle the dispute. Many of these difficulties, a considerable number of which developed into strikes while others were "impending," caused the deepest concern to the Government and to the country at large. The efforts of the Department—always directed toward the adjustment of disputes without stoppage of work—thus increased in necessity, value, and importance. The experience gained by Secretary Wilson in all kinds of trade disputes during the preceding four years proved of inestimable usefulness at this juncture.

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In the hundreds of cases handled by the Secretary visible success did not always crown the efforts at adjustment. But even in such cases the value of the Department was made clear to all concerned, largely by the removal of misapprehensions—hitherto held in certain quarters—regarding the influence and the neutrality of the Department in labor matters. It was the policy of Secretary Wilson not to endeavor to impose his viewpoint upon either the worker or the management in any dispute that might arise, but rather to find some basis mutually acceptable even though it might not be mutually satisfactory. In other words, the work of mediation is not a judicial work; it is not a judicial function; it is not to hear both sides and then determine the rights and wrongs of the situation, or to pass judgment and then enforce its decision. The work is diplomatic rather than judicial, and it is in that spirit the problems of conciliation in labor controversies are approached. No man in the nation understood this underlying principle as well as did Secretary Wilson.

In line with this purpose the Secretary often was able to remove the barriers which prevented employers and employees meeting on common ground. Thus the way was paved for more friendly relations and a broader grasp of their respective rights. The fact is brought home that there is another side, and even in the absence of immediate success the seed is sown which bears fruit in some modification of working conditions with a greater consideration for the human rights of employees or a better understanding of problems which harass employers. Labor has discovered that it has a standing in the Government ma-

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chinery of its country whenever its demands are based on its industrial and constitutional rights. Employers, on the other hand, have found in the Department a defender against unreasonable exaction.

It would be impossible to estimate in money value what the services of Secretary Wilson saved to the country during the war. The tremendous aggregate of the contracts for foodstuffs, clothing, material, and general equipment of the Army and Navy in connection with further contracts for the construction of buildings for the military and naval branches and for additional buildings for other Federal departments, together with the problems presented by the transportation of coal, ore, lumber, and many forms of raw material, required the employment of a vast army of skilled and unskilled labor. The necessities of the Government were imperative that all supplies should be provided speedily and that the construction work incident to the public needs at this period should be expedited.

With Government activities in the construction of ships and with the unprecedented demand upon productive agencies for the materials needed in the work, it became of vital importance that the Secretary of Labor exert special efforts to adjust all controversies that might hinder or retard the Government. In a majority of the cases presented for mediation a fine spirit of co-operation was evinced by both employers and employees. Notwithstanding the limited force of conciliators available, the experience gained in their previous handling of negotiations as representatives of the Department proved of immense utility to the plans of the General Government.

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The extraordinary demand for "man power," on the industrial as distinguished from the military side of war preparation, was responded to by Secretary Wilson through the United States Employment Service as soon as the demand arose. This Service was the successor of the old Division of Information of the Immigration Service—separated in January, 1918. Much of this demand was found to have been influenced more by eagerness for labor at low or inadequate wages relatively to the sharp rise in living expenses than by general labor shortage. But in some places, especially in the neighborhoods of munition establishments which had been serving European war demands at enormous profits, there was a genuine scarcity of labor for less profitable forms of production. On the whole, the problem at first probably was less a problem of labor scarcity than of imperfect distribution.

Shortly after the declaration that a state of war existed between the United States and Germany a call came to this Department from the United States Shipping Board to locate and report on the number of ship carpenters, calkers, and other skilled ship workers in the United States available for immediate duty. Telegraphic instructions were sent at once to the offices of the United States Employment Service to list all experienced ship workers in their respective zones, and to that end to ask the co-operation of all newspapers and labor organizations in making known the fact that such information was desired. Within ten days a list of approximately 19,000 skilled mechanics ready to respond to the call of the Government or firms engaged in shipbuilding under contract

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with the Government was filed in the Division of Information. The trades-unions in which shipbuilding mechanics held membership at once prepared registers of available workmen and they continued to keep such registers available, notwithstanding the fact that for several months such workmen were not called for. Many construction difficulties interfered and some shipyards had to be set up entire.

When the President called upon tillers of the soil to extend their planted areas, favorable responses came plentifully from every State. They were accompanied, however, by insistent appeals for farm help. To obtain this help many expedients were suggested. Volunteers offered advice and assistance, formulated plans, and projected organizations. Some of the many schemes seemed well adapted to the emergency; others, doubtless as well intended, were less encouraging. Of those proposed most were deferred as premature or abandoned as inappropriate or ineffective. Out of the confusion many extravagant notions got currency. There were fears, for instance, that the supply of adult farm workers would be depleted beyond remedy by the war, and suggestions for employing boys were apparently on the way of popular approval. Short school terms were suggested, even no school at all, in order that children might be released from study to work on farms and in factories. This hysteria seemed for a time to threaten complete abandonment of the orderly processes of education, of efforts at vocational guidance, and of regulation of child labor with reference to working age, dangerous employments, and hours of work. It was in those circumstances that Secretary Wilson—at the

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advice of William E. Hall and Nathan G. Smythe—organized the United States Boys' Working Reserve. By fixing the minimum age limit for membership in the Reserve at sixteen years the Secretary discouraged inconsiderate agitations for relaxing the established standards of child life. Only such boys as were over school age were put to work by the Reserve or even accepted for membership.

Through this organization, making use of the experience of our war allies with reference to schooling requirements and child labor, the Department recruited a large body of boys of sufficient age and strength to be put with safety at systematic work. By having this body in readiness for seasonable and other emergent employment a tendency to demand mobilization of young children for industrial service in connection with the war was checked.

In the summer of 1916 information concerning the destitute and dependent circumstances of certain refugees arriving in this country from Mexico was brought to the attention of Secretary Wilson. Notice was thereupon given to all officers of the Immigration and Employment Services throughout the United States to communicate with the inspectors in charge at Galveston, Texas, and Los Angeles, California, with respect to unfilled opportunities for employment in their respective zones, especially those in which the employer expressed a willingness to advance transportation. This action was taken with a view of alleviating the conditions of the refugees by directing them to places of profitable employment. The records show that the employment officers of the Department in widely separated parts of the country entered heartily

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into the work of securing opportunities for employment for these unfortunate persons, many employers agreeing to advance transportation. On October 25, 1916, when a final report on the subject was received from the Department's representative at Galveston, Texas, all save three of the refugees who had expressed a desire to secure employment were engaged permanently in gainful occupations. On account of age or physical disability the three remaining unemployed were unable to accept the work offered them.

The activities of the United States Employment Service on February 1, 1917, embraced a much broader scope and presented a more animated appearance than had been the case for the same month in previous years. At this period the normal work of the service had been greatly stimulated by demands for skilled mechanics in munition factories as well as for navy yards and arsenals.

At this time, too, the members of the National Guard who had been on duty on the Mexican border were being returned to their homes and mustered out of the Federal Service. For the purpose of securing employment for such members of the guard as had no position awaiting them, instructions were issued to all field officers of the United States Employment Service to take the matter up with the military authorities and other public officials within their respective zones with the view of rendering all assistance in the power of the Employment Service to accomplish that result. Instructions were given in connection with the foregoing also to render all possible aid in securing employment for wage earners in the

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families of the guardsmen who were still on duty on the Mexican border. With the idea of co-operating with the War Department in securing information as to the date when guardsmen would be returned to their respective homes, a representative of the Department was designated to give personal attention to this matter and to take charge of the important task of securing employment for all.

It was the privilege of the Bureau of Immigration, working under the direction of Secretary Wilson, to take the first step in actually carrying out the will of the country in joining in the battle for democracy against autocracy. When it became evident that Congress would declare a state of war to exist, the Bureau was directed by the Secretary to arrange for assuming custody of the officers and crews of all the German ships lying in the harbors of the mainland of the United States, Honolulu, and Porto Rico, and to lay plans for the co-operation of other interested departments which would insure the taking of this first step promptly when the time came and without hitch or friction. After consultation with the several interested departments, instructions were issued to the officers in charge at the various ports where vessels of Germany were anchored which resulted in having all the men on duty and the boarding boats in readiness to proceed at a moment's notice. Certain officers of the Bureau remained on duty with the Secretary and his staff of assistants during the night of April 4, awaiting word from the Capitol as to the contemplated action of Congress.

At 3:14 A. M., April 5, the message came that Congress had declared a state of war to exist. At 3:15

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o'clock the prearranged message reading "Proceed instantly, Wilson," was cabled and telegraphed to the appropriate ports; and the next instant the Secretary of the Treasury was informed over an open telephone wire that such message had gone, whereupon a similar message from him to the collectors of customs, directing them to take charge of the vessels from which the immigration officers would remove the German officers and crews, was likewise dispatched. The removal of the men from the ships immediately ensued, and this was accomplished promptly and without any accident or untoward incident, instructions previously issued having contemplated that all should be treated with every kindness and courtesy. This merely inaugurated the enormous task that fell to the Bureau's lot, for of course arrangements had to be perfected and carried out for the internment of all the alien enemies taken from the ships. These officers and crews were not regarded as in any sense prisoners of war, but simply as aliens who had not been admitted to the United States under the immigration law, and who, in addition, had suddenly become enemies of this country and for whose care and safety proper provision had to be made. As rapidly as possible they were assembled in the available places best suited to their internment.

This preliminary work with respect to alien enemies was followed by the consideration, investigation, and disposal of numerous applications for permission to enter and applications for parole, submitted to the Department of Justice through this Department under arrangements made in accordance with the President's proclamation of April 6, 1917; the examina-

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tion and taking into custody of Germans arriving as passengers and as seamen on American and neutral ships; and the apprehension and taking into custody of others found to be at large in the United States whose continued freedom here was deemed to be against the interests of the United States while the war was in progress. It further became the Bureau's duty, owing to the congestion at the immigration stations at certain ports, where these alien enemies were originally interned, to select a site and construct thereon appropriate buildings to constitute a satisfactory internment camp for alien enemies.

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CHAPTER XIX

During the War

Had the Department of Labor not existed at the beginning of the war, Congress would have been obliged to create such a department.

The history of all the belligerent powers proved that war was no longer a military undertaking alone. Although sound military strategy remained an essential factor in determining military victories, the history of the European war demonstrated that the most valorous troops were helpless without adequate supplies of war materials. Battles were fought not only between armed men, but between factories, workshops, and mines of the contending nations. Since industry is but the application of man power to raw materials, the efficiency of industry was wholly dependent upon the efficiency of labor. The greater essential, therefore, for our Government was the adoption of a central labor administration and a consistent labor policy. Consequently upon the outbreak of hostilities an almost unprecedented responsibility rested upon Secretary Wilson.

The war was the immediate cause of an enormous increase in the number of labor disputes calling for Government mediation. Old wage standards, rendered obsolete by a sharp rise in the cost of living, the prevalence of profiteering, the faulty distribution of labor, and many other causes all contributed to a probable increase in the actual number of such dis-

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putes. The chief reason, however, for the increase in the work of the Department in this respect was not an increase in the number of controversies. It lay rather in the fact that when those disputes arose one side or the other hastened to call upon Secretary Wilson to prevent any cessation of work.

During the summer of 1917 certain industrial disturbances had accumulated throughout the West and Northwest, and had taken on such a form as seriously to lessen the output of several much needed materials, notably copper and oil. In addition, they were of such a character as to threaten the construction of aircraft and ships. Since these disturbances were apparently due to general rather than purely local causes, it was thought desirable to make an inquiry into the causes of labor unrest. A Mediation Commission was accordingly appointed by the President early in the fall for the purpose of conducting such an investigation and of making the specific adjustments required. Secretary Wilson was Chairman of the Commission, and the members of the Commission were chosen in part from the Department of Labor.

Secretary Wilson and his Commission spent several months in constant travel and investigation, visiting the copper districts of Arizona, the oil fields of California, the Pacific Northwest timber districts, and other sections where industry had been disturbed by labor unrest. Starting out in the early fall, the Commission finished its labors in December at Chicago, where there was a threatened strike in the meat-packing establishments. In that time hundreds of witnesses were heard and an extraordinary opportu-

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nity was afforded to study at first hand labor problems in part created and in part modified by the war.

After the Secretary's return many employers and employees, involved in controversies, evinced a keen desire to secure his good offices and those of his conciliators.

The anxiety of the Government, particularly at this time, for a full production from mine, mill, and factory, in order that the war progress of the United States and of our European allies might be unhampered, caused Secretary Wilson to strain every effort to secure satisfactory adjustments in all cases with the special purpose of preventing wherever possible any stoppage of work and consequent loss in output and wages. Vastly increased production was thus facilitated.

It was often the case that employers refused to deal with committees representing their own employees; but even in these instances they never refused to meet and discuss the merits of the dispute with Secretary Wilson. The opportunity thus afforded each side to learn the real position taken by the other soon bore fruit. This knowledge, or glance over their respective fences, usually enabled the Secretary, by tactfully emphasizing the mutuality of interest and such equity as existed in the respective claims, to reconcile the differences.

The success which attended such work was most gratifying. In many instances strikes which would have involved thousands of workers engaged in great operations were quietly averted through the efforts of Secretary Wilson. All this was accomplished without publicity and the consequent excitement which in-

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variably attends industrial disturbances when heralded in the press. Great plants thus secured uninterrupted production for long periods—some of the agreements running for a year and others for the period of the war.

There, however, was much for the Department of Labor to do besides conciliation work; there was much for it to do besides that which the four old bureaus could accomplish, namely, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bureau of Naturalization, Bureau of Immigration, and the Children's Bureau, together with the newly born Employment Service. Secretary Wilson, therefore, determined to call to his assistance, as advisers and administrators, a well balanced corps of men and women of high standing, representing capital, labor, and the public. Such a course was not only desirable but necessary in order that any policies determined upon should command the approval and support of employers, employees, and the public.

Secretary Wilson's first step in this process was the appointment of an Advisory Council of seven members chosen to represent various interests, with a representative of the general public, Hon. John Lind, as chairman. The other members of the council were as follows: Mr. Wadill Catchings and Mr. A. A. Landon, representing employers; Mr. John Casey and Mr. John B. Lennon, representing wage earners; Miss Agnes Nestor, representing women; and Dr. L. C. Marshall as economist of the council. This council convened in January and proceeded to formulate plans. Many recommendations were made, nearly all of which were adopted.

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The general plan involved not only an extension of the existing organizations within the Department of Labor so as to make them suitable for war emergency purposes, but also provided for additional means by which they could be brought into proper administrative relations with bureaus in other departments. It was found necessary, in carrying this plan into effect, to depart frequently from the specific recommendations, but they were adhered to in principal throughout. The general nature of the recommendations is indicated in the following memorandum submitted to the Secretary by the Advisory Council. This memorandum, after reciting the essentials of the war labor administration as laid down by the President, read as follows:

"The Secretary of Labor selected an Advisory Council to aid him in formulating the national labor program and in organizing an adequate administration of this program. The progress of the work may at this time be summarized as follows:

"(1) A call has been issued for a conference between representatives of employers and of workers in order that agreements may be reached on fundamental principles and policies which would govern their relations.

"(2) An appropriation bill is ready for presentation to Congress to provide funds for the following services within the Department of Labor:

(a) An Adjustment Service to deal with industrial disputes.

(b) A Conditions of Labor Service to administer conditions of labor within business plants, such as safety, sanitation, etc.

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(c) An Information and Education Service to promote sound sentiment and to provide appropriate local machinery and policies in individual plants.

(d) A Woman in Industry Service to correlate the activities of various agencies dealing with this matter.

(e) A Training and Dilution Service.

(f) A Housing and Transportation of Workers Service.

(g) A Personnel Service (which may possibly be fused with the Information and Education Service.)

"In addition to these services, there will be utilized the United States Employment Service and other bureaus already established in the Department for which funds are now available.

"A plan has been approved by the Secretary of Labor whereby these various services have been organized into a coherent whole, and their relationships to existing agencies in other Departments have been indicated."

Chief among the plans suggested was a method for formulating a set of principles which should guide the war labor administration. It was vitally necessary that such principles should be accepted by both capital and labor. Hence it was desirable that they be formulated, in so far as possible, by employers and wage earners jointly. Upon the advice of the council, therefore, Secretary Wilson called upon the National Industrial Conference Board and the American Federation of Labor, as the representatives of employers and wage earners, respectively, to send five

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persons each to a war labor conference. Since it was recognized that it might be a matter of extreme difficulty to choose a chairman acceptable to both groups, each group was invited to choose a chairman who should preside upon alternate days. The personnel of this board was as follows[1]: Joint Chairmen—Hon. William Howard Taft and Hon. Frank P. Walsh; Representing Employers—C. E. Michael, Loyall A. Osborne, W. H. Van Dervoort, B. L. Worden, L. F. Loree; Representing Wage Earners—Frank J. Hayes, William J. Hutcheson, William H. Johnson, Victor A. Olander, T. A. Rickert.

In spite of the fact that the members of this conference board represented divergent viewpoints, a unanimous report was presented on March 29 laying down a set of principles. There was also recommended the creation of a National War Labor Board to adjust labor disputes in fields of production necessary to the effective conduct of the war. Since the conference board had in the course of its deliberations discussed in detail the probable interpretation of many of the principles adopted, that board was deemed best fitted to administer the rules and functions set forth. Secretary Wilson, therefore, appointed the same persons as members of the National War Labor Board, and this action was formally approved by Presidential proclamation on April 8, 1918.

During 1917 and 1918 perplexing questions had

[1] Subsequently Mr. Loree resigned and Mr. Fred C. Hood was chosen to succeed him. Later Mr. Thomas J. Savage was chosen to replace Mr. Johnston, who was absent on a mission to Europe. On October 9 Mr. Savage died, and Mr. Johnston, who in the meantime had returned to this country, resumed his place on the Board.

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arisen and investigations had been made with regard to Negroes. With the greater industrial efficiency demanded by the war it became apparent that a more harmonious adjustment of the labor relations between Whites and Negroes was imperative, especially in view of the fact that the latter race makes up over one-tenth of our total population and includes about one-sixth of the working population. It had long been the policy of Secretary Wilson to avail himself of the best expert knowledge obtainable in the administration of such problems. Hence the requests, made not only by Negroes but by many white persons as well, that the Negroes be represented upon the Secretary's staff by a person of their own race, met with a favorable hearing. In January the Advisory Council was requested to confer with various persons who had been active in such matters and to report a plan.

As a result of such conferences the Advisory Council recommended that a Negro adviser to the Secretary of Labor be appointed. After consultation with many persons of both races, Secretary Wilson asked Dr. George E. Haynes to advise him in such matters, and tendered him an appointment as Director of Negro Economics. Dr. Haynes, who was at that time professor of economics and sociology in Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee, entered upon his duties May 1. His function is to advise the Secretary on matters affecting Negro wage earners, and to outline and direct plans toward greater production in agriculture and other industries. This step was taken, not only because the advice of an expert was necessary, but because it was felt that a race which made up such a large proportion of our industrial army, and had

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contributed so generously to our military and naval forces, was certainly entitled to a seat at the Secretary's council table when matters affecting its interests were considered.

Among problems of this sort submitted to the Advisory Council was that of co-ordinating the services and bureaus in the Department of Labor with similar services and bureaus in other departments. In the fixing of wages and working conditions, for instance, adjustment boards and agencies existed in practically every production branch of the Government. The work of these agencies was frequently in conflict, and it was highly desirable that their policies be unified and that the boards themselves work in harmonious relations with each other. There also were incompatibilities with regard to the supervision of working conditions, housing, and many other functions of the Department of Labor. As a means of bringing these agencies into mutual relationships, the Advisory Council recommended the creation by the Secretary of Labor of a War Labor Policies Board, to be composed of the chiefs of the various bureaus and services of the Department, together with representatives of the other production departments of the Government.

In accordance with this recommendation, the War Labor Policies Board was created on May 13, 1918, with Mr. Felix Frankfurter, Assistant to the Secretary of Labor, as chairman. Its first meeting was held on May 29, 1918. The departments, boards, and administrations represented were the Department of Labor, the War Department, the Navy Department, the Department of Agriculture, the United States

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Shipping Board, the Emergency Fleet Corporation, the Fuel Administration, the Railroad Administration, the War Industries Board. In addition to members representing these branches of the administration, the Policies Board had advisers representing labor, and others who were qualified in business management and technical fields.

The need for the War Labor Policies Board arose from the fact that the Federal Government had become the greatest employer in the country. And although the Government represented one people and might therefore be expected to have a single broad policy toward labor, the first twelve months of the war brought out many adverse policies from that single Government. The inevitable result was that the nation, operating through different agencies, was saying and doing irreconcilable things. Not all of the war policies announced by the several branches of the Administration could be right, because many of them were mutually contradictory.

The function of the Board was to reconcile such differences in so far as they referred to administration of labor matters, and to recommend to the Secretary unified labor policies to harmonize the industrial activities of separate branches of the Government. It was well adapted to this end, since—although it was created by Secretary Wilson and operated under his direction—it included responsible representatives of other branches of the Government. Among the various matters which this board considered may be mentioned the elimination of labor turnover, the adoption of uniform standards, industrial exemptions, wage stabilization, and the employment of women.

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The Advisory Council had included among its recommendations a plan for the general supervision of such labor problems as involve women. It was impossible, because of the lack of funds, to carry out this plan at the time it was proposed. Application had been made to Congress for the needed appropriation, but some delay resulted, and it was not until the end of the fiscal year that the needed sum became available.

The Woman in Industry Service was organized by Secretary Wilson early in July, with Miss Mary Van Kleeck as its director and Miss Mary Anderson as assistant director. Miss Van Kleeck had previously served the Ordnance Department in a similar capacity. The effects of the first draft had become more evident and the importance of the employment of women grew daily more significant. The announcement of the plans to extend the draft to include all men between the age of 18 and 45 brought a still keener realization of the fact that production for the war would depend in increasing measure upon the effective employment of a growing force of women workers.

The council also recommended an Investigation and Inspection Service. The functions of this service are outlined in Secretary Wilson's letter specifying the essentials of a war labor administration. I will quote from that part of the letter referring to the Investigation and Inspection Service:

"A force of investigators will also be needed for the various other services here contemplated. In view of the fact that the services of an inspector, examiner, and investigator may often be combined in one

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man, especially at the beginning of the work, and also that the handling of a field force which travels from place to place is a large task in itself, I believe that the greatest economy and efficiency can be obtained by combining these field forces under the Secretary in one inspector in charge and in a special service, to be called 'Investigation and Inspection Service.'

"It will be my purpose to require all new services in the Department to use this Investigation and Inspection Service so far as possible in all their field work. For this purpose the inspector in charge of the service will provide, on consultation with other branches of the Department, methods of inspection, investigation, and examination, including blank forms for reports on the various necessary subjects, and will transmit such reports when made to the various branches to which they belong.

"There are certain limits, however, to the work which such inspectors, investigators, and examiners do. They cannot, for instance, act as mediators or as experts on training. In these cases the field forces are estimated in the services to which they are attached."

Within a week from the date of the granting of the appropriation, the service was established under Mr. Ethelbert Stewart as director and Miss Gertrude Barnum as assistant director. On August 15, 1918, Secretary Wilson sent a letter to all services of the Department, announcing that the Investigation and Inspection Service was equipped with a sufficient force to handle the business of investigation and inspection for the various services of the Department.

The Advisory Council recommended, among other

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things, the necessity for the creation of an agency which would furnish (a) "a satisfactory method and administration for training of workers; (b) an agency for dilution of skilled labor as and when needed." Hence Secretary Wilson formed the Training and Dilution Service on July 16, 1918, and appointed Mr. Charles T. Clayton director. For the purposes of administration it was divided into a Planning, an Administrative, a Training, and a Dilution Division.

The Information and Education Service was organized July 1, 1918. The Secretary had already appointed as chief of this service Mr. Roger W. Babson of Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts.

The legal authority for this service is found in the general powers conferred by the statute upon the original Department of Labor, now the Bureau of Labor Statistics,[1] and in the additional authority conferred upon that bureau and upon the Department by the organic act of March 4, 1913.[2]

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[1] "There shall be at the seat of Government a Department of Labor, the general design and duties of which shall be to acquire and diffuse among the people of the United States useful information on subjects connected with labor, in the most general and comprehensive sense of that word, and especially upon its relation to capital, the hours of labor, the earnings of laboring men and women, and the means of promoting their material, social, intellectual, and moral prosperity."

[2] The act of March 4, 1913, Vol. 37, P. 737, provides in Section 4 as follows: "The Bureau of Labor Statistics, under the direction of the Secretary of Labor, shall collect, collate, and report at least once each year, or oftener if necessary, full and complete statistics of the conditions of labor and the products and distribution of the products of the same, and to this end said Secretary shall have power to employ any or either of the bureaus provided for his Department and to rearrange such statistical work and to distribute or consolidate the same as may be deemed desirable in the public in-

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The original purpose of the Bureau of Labor, and the interpretation of its functions by the first Commissioner of Labor, was that the office was to be primarily devoted to informative and educational work.

The Information and Education Service handled the publication of information and such educational matters as were especially needed in the war emergency. The more immediate purpose of this service was to promote sound sentiment in industrial plants, to combat unsound industrial philosophies, and to acquaint the public with the national war labor program of the Government. The following divisions were created:

(1) Educational Division, under F. T. Miller and Clara Sears Taylor.
(2) Division of Information, under George W. Coleman.
(3) Division of Industrial Plants, under F. T. Hawley.
(4) Division of Economics, under Dr. Davis R. Dewey.
(5) Posters Division, under J. R. Colburn.

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terests. . . . And said Secretary of Labor may collate, arrange, and publish such statistical information so obtained in such manner as to him may seem wise."

Section 8 provides that: "All duties performed and all power and authority now possessed or exercised by the head of any executive department in and over any bureau, office, officer, branch, or division of the public service by this act transferred to the Department of Labor, or any business arising therefrom or pertaining thereto, or in relation to the duties performed by and authority conferred by law upon such bureau, office, officer, board, branch, or division of the public service, whether of an appellate or revisory character or otherwise, shall hereafter be vested in and exercised by the head of the said Department of Labor."

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In addition to these an Inquiry Office was also established as an aid for the improved and effective information of those visiting the Department and wishing to familiarize themselves with its workings. This office was under Miss Alice L. Kercher.

One of the first war problems which came to the attention of Secretary Wilson was the problem of housing excess numbers of war workers who had been gathering in industrial centers. As soon as preparation for hostilities began on a large scale, industrial plants were doubled, trebled, and quadrupled in size, and man power to operate these expanded industries was quickly supplied. This expansion occurred so rapidly that in hundreds of manufacturing centers the number of workers soon outran the housing facilities available for their accommodations.

At first such congestion gave rise to problems of welfare only, but so rapidly did many of our industrial centers increase that living accommodations were inadequate even without regard to sanitary conditions. Under such circumstances Secretary Wilson assumed the administration of industrial housing and transportation. His task was rendered the more difficult because this phase of our industrial preparation had apparently been overlooked by those charged with the merely physical factors of production.

Congress granted appropriations totaling $100,000,000 for this work, all of which was placed in the hands of Secretary Wilson. In anticipation of the granting of this sum, Mr. Otto M. Eidlitz was requested to undertake the formation and organization of a Bureau of Industrial Housing and Transportation in the Department. Mr. Eidlitz had previously

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served the Advisory Commission to the Council of National Defense in certain preliminary investigations by the Industrial Housing Section of a sub-committee of that body. He had also acted as an adviser to the Emergency Fleet Corporation, and was quite familiar with the problems involved, not only as they applied to munitions centers, but to shipyards as well.

The original memorandum of the Advisory Council recommended the creation, together with other services, of a Conditions of Labor Service. This recommendation was in general compliance with that paragraph of the President's memorandum which directed the Secretary of Labor to set up "machinery for safeguarding conditions of labor in the production of war essentials." This branch of the Department has been known since that time by the name Working Conditions Service, instead of the Conditions of Labor Service, as originally proposed.

English experience had demonstrated to Secretary Wilson that a service of this kind was essential in order to secure the largest possible output of munitions of war. Where no supervisory power over conditions of labor was exercised, health precautions were disregarded and the hours of labor extended, with a consequent reduction in health and efficiency. In the United States, it is true, the laws of the States provide certain standards for working conditions, particularly with reference to light, air, and safety appliances. These laws, however, are not uniform among the several States, and certainly were not adapted to the industries which sprang up during the war.

Prior to the establishment of the Working Condi-

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tions Service, the various production departments of the Government each had some form of organization to supervise work upon contracts placed by the respective departments. These bureaus, however, had no single point of contact and no machinery by which uniformity in the respective standards set up by them could be effected. Hence the necessity for centralizing all existing machinery having to do with working conditions in the Department of Labor.

The Working Conditions Service was established early in August, 1918, by the appointment of Mr. Grant Hamilton as its director. For administrative purposes there are three divisions, a Division of Industrial Hygiene and Medicine, a Division of Labor Administration, and a Division of Safety Engineering.

The Division of Industrial Hygiene and Medicine worked in co-operation with the United States Public Health Service in the Treasury Department. As a result of an agreement reached between the two services, personnel was detailed from the Public Health Service to the Working Conditions Service. Dr. A. J. Lanza, of the former service, was detailed to act as Chief of the Division of Industrial Hygiene and Medicine. Dr. C. D. Selby, of Toledo, Ohio, was Chief of the Section of Industrial Medicine. The function of this section was to organize medical preventive methods and to endeavor to keep employees in proper health condition to do their best work. It was its endeavor, also, to reduce occupational disease, and to discover health hazards in order to reduce labor turnover. It directed the formation of sanitary and health codes for industries.

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The Division of Labor Administration dealt with the attitude and policies of management toward employees and the personnel relations between employers and employed. It studied the general problems of labor administration, including scientific management, fatigue studies, auditing, etc. It sought to avoid regimentation and endeavored to make the development of individual initiative its primary objective.

The Division of Safety Engineering formulated standards for mechanical safety in much the same manner as the Division of Industrial Hygiene and Medicine dealt with sanitation and industrial hygiene. In the formation of codes it co-operated with the Bureau of Standards.

Prior to the extension of the departmental organization, through the expansion of the United States Employment Service and the subsequent organization of the War Labor Administration, departmental business required no very elaborate machinery for its administration. The exigencies of the war, however, expanded the existing bureaus and services from four to fourteen. The presence of such a large number of administrative agencies naturally raised questions within the Department as to the relations of the bureaus with one another and to departmental policies. For the purpose of maintaining coherency in departmental policy, as well as to promote friendly intra-departmental relations, a departmental cabinet was instituted by Secretary Wilson.

The members of the cabinet were the Assistant Secretary, the Solicitor as Acting Secretary, the Chief Clerk, the Director of Negro Economics, and the ad-

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ministrative heads of the statutory bureaus and the war emergency services. The total membership was fourteen. The Secretary presided, and in his absence the Assistant Secretary, the Solicitor, or the Chairman of the War Labor Policies Board, in the order named. The Chief Clerk of the Department acted as secretary of the cabinet. Meetings were held every Tuesday morning.

All during the war Secretary Wilson looked forward to the day when our victorious soldiers would return to their peaceful and customary pursuits and join once more in the upbuilding through industry of the nation which they had defended by force of arms. Nor was he unmindful of the fact that the overwhelming mass of our armies was drawn from the ranks of wage earners, and that when their military task was done these men would return to the ranks of wage earners. It would have been an ungrateful nation, indeed, which did not deem it its first duty to assure to its returned soldiers honorable and profitable employment. It has been the unfortunate experience of the armies of other nations that gratitude has been too frequently confined to words, and men who have risked their lives have too often been released from military life to find an industrial condition where there were more men than opportunities for work. In consequence, such men have frequently submitted to the humiliation of accepting alms. Secretary Wilson, therefore, believed that the problem of providing profitable employment for our returned soldiers was a paramount duty. It was in furtherance of this idea that the Secretary created and extended the United States Employment Service. The

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duties of this service, in brief, were to bring together the manless job and the jobless man. It was, therefore, contemplated to use its full resources in minimizing such unemployment as should occur. Even in the most prosperous periods, however, there is a disparity between the actual number of wage earners and the number that our industries can absorb. Under the most favorable circumstances this unemployed surplus is such as to give rise to grave social and industrial problems. So long as this basic condition persists, it is apparent that the mere bringing together of men and jobs is not sufficient. In order to provide for this surplus, Secretary Wilson saw that we must do more than seek for employment among opportunities already existing. We must correct the disparity itself. Consequently, he faced the further duty of creating new opportunities for employment. Personal experience, as well as the undoubted necessity for a continuous augmentation of the world's food supply for many years to come, indicated to him that a more extensive as well as more intensive use of our natural resources must be made. The soil must remain the chief working opportunity for large numbers of the nation's wage earners. It is, therefore, desirable and imperative that a comprehensive policy with regard to the public domain be established.

The same problem was before us more than a half-century before. Access to the public domain was provided by the homestead law of 1862 and further privileges extended specifically to soldiers in 1872. The results of this policy were beneficial in that they provided work for unemployed persons, but such benefits were also accompanied by grave evils. Too

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frequently the efforts of the settler, who was not inured to the hardships of the frontier or familiar with agriculture, resulted in failure. Isolated from his fellows and remote from the advantages of the city, the pioneer achieved only after a long struggle such form or organization as rural life now possesses. Other nations have profited by our bitter experience in this respect, and have in consequence abandoned homesteading or the method by which the early settler is merely provided with a land title and left like Robinson Crusoe to work out his own salvation. For the uncertainties of homesteading there should be substituted an orderly, properly planned scheme of colonization, in which the Federal Government shall establish and equip not only individual farms, but also link them together into organized communities. Rural planning should be brought into play in order to make life in the rural districts attractive and in order to stem the movement from the farm to the cities.

Settlers should likewise be protected from the evils of land speculation. The liberal grants of former years to soldiers were of almost no value to the supposed beneficiaries, because of the speedy transfer to persons who were primarily interested in the resale of such lands at higher prices. Speculation and inflation are evils which it has been found impossible to correct in the experience of our associated belligerents. The Secretary therefore favored the adoption of some form of tenure which would lay less stress upon title and more upon actual use of occupants. The absolute tenure does not seem to be well adapted to public colonization, since it is useless to the working settler and attractive to the speculator. There

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are several other forms of tenure, including the perpetual leasehold, better adapted for our purposes.

Secretary Wilson, therefore, recommended the early enactment of such legislation as would be necessary to permit the preparation of the public domain for this purpose. Such legislation should, he believed, provide for the purchase of such privately owned areas as it may be found desirable to add to the public areas. Moreover, it should not be limited to agriculture. In this connection he wrote:

"Great areas are, by reason of natural adaptation, necessarily destined for forest uses. The wasteful methods in vogue in the past in the lumber industry have resulted in the practical destruction of our fine forest areas. The policy has been to treat trees as deposits of wood above the surface and of the same nature as mines, which are deposits of mineral below the surface. These deposits have been destroyed one after the other without regard for the needs of the future. At the same time, the industry has been a movable one, operated in the main by men the nature of whose work denies them home or marriage or even votes. No one who has the interest of America at heart can look forward with tolerance to the growth or continuance of a body of migratory workers, who in the nature of the case must have lower social and moral standards than their fellows and a hatred for the law which they have never known except in the repressive aspect. Happily, the possession of the National Forests gives us an opportunity to apply the principles of colonization to timber lands also. The substitution of scientific silviculture for timber mining will give us an opportunity to establish perma-

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nent forest communities where local self-government, marriage, and education are possible.

"In presenting these recommendations at this time, I regard it as unnecessary to point out further possibilities, of which the foregoing will serve as an example. In setting forth the necessity for land settlement I am not unmindful of the vast numbers who must again find places in our complex industrial organization. It is too early at present to forecast accurately the industrial organization or needs of our nation after the war. All the properly adapted facilities of the Department of Labor are at present engaged in the study of those problems of reconstruction peculiar to manufacturing and secondary industry; and from time to time I shall have recommendations and conclusions to present based upon such studies. No such doubt, however, exists with regard to primary industry, and I urge early legislation in accordance with the principles laid down in the foregoing paragraphs.

"Legislation upon this important subject should include three minimum provisions: (1) Possibilities of commercialized speculation in titles must be guarded against. (2) Colonists must be given access not only to land but to farms, not the bare soil but fully equipped agricultural plants ready to operate. (3) The farms themselves must be welded together into genuine communities by provision for roads, schools, and markets, under the general supervision of the Federal Government.

"The primary principle involved is not the use of men for the development of land, but the development of land for the use of men. With regard to machin-

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ery for putting these provisions into effect, I recommend the organization of a board consisting of the Secretaries of the Departments of Agriculture, Interior, and Labor for the further organization and supervision of the general plan. Regardless of the machinery by which it is put into operation, whatever legislation is granted should recognize the cardinal principle that the natural resources of the nation are for the common good of all and should be accessible on such terms as to discourage speculation and exploitation and to reward diligence and thrift."

In connection with the above the Secretary recommended the immediate stimulation of public and private building, and especially the construction of public works of every useful nature. Among those to whom he gave the responsibility of presenting these plans to the nation should be mentioned Mr. Franklin T. Miller, Mr. Frederic C. Howe, and Mr. Hugh Reid.

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CHAPTER XX

Collective Bargaining

Owing to the very large acquaintance which Secretary Wilson had among union labor leaders, the pressure upon him was naturally very great to favor organized labor. This was intensified by the fact that organized labor has always been very helpful in securing the necessary appropriations from Congress for the proper development of the Department of Labor. Although Congress passed the organic act creating the Department of Labor, it has been very niggardly in appropriations. This is why the Department of Labor has been so handicapped in its efforts to perform conscientiously the work given it to do.

The Secretary always believed that the welfare of the community, including all interests, is better advanced when labor is organized than when it is not. The war experience showed clearly this fact. In the industries where labor was organized there was very little trouble between 1914 and 1919. The labor troubles during the war almost wholly existed among the unorganized workers. Notwithstanding this fact, however, Secretary Wilson always leaned over backward in favor of the employers who had open shops. Said he to me one day:

"Mr. Babson, my great ambition is to have people say of me these two things,—first, that I have kept my word, and second, that I have been fair. I am a poor

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man, and I shall die a poor man. I have had a very hard life, and am suffering today from the fatigue of it. I care not for riches, or power, or credit. But I do want people to say, when they meet about my bier, that I have always kept my word and that I have tried to be fair."

With this spirit he has always met the employers who were opposed to unions. He believed in their sincerity. He knew that the employer who was opposed to a union was as a rule just as conscientious and honest as the labor leader who believed in a union. Secretary Wilson knows that nothing can be accomplished in this world through force, but that men must be converted to an idea through their reason or through their heart.

The Secretary always opposed hasty action. "It's the oak that grows slowly which becomes the great tree, and which lives a long time. The cottonwood trees, the birches, and the rest which grow quickly, can't stand much wind, and they always die quickly. Therefore, although we must constantly keep our eye on the desired goal and swing neither to the right nor to the left, yet we must be willing to move slowly."

It was with this attitude that Secretary Wilson always faced a problem of "Collective Bargaining," in favor of which the Department of Labor clearly went on record during the great European war. During the Secretary's long experience in settling labor controversies, he found that two things prominently stand out. These are as follows:

(1) Labor refuses to assent to compulsory arbitration, believing that the only difference between a free

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man and a slave is that the free man is free to quit work if he desires.

(2) Capital refuses to grant the closed shop, believing that it is undemocratic, and that a labor autocracy may become as bad as a military autocracy.

When the great war broke out labor and capital were divided into two hostile camps in accordance with the above declarations. Secretary Wilson brought these two interests together through the formation of the War Labor Board in a way which no one else could possibly do. He refused to discuss either compulsory arbitration or the closed shop, but appealed to both to recognize "Collective Bargaining." On the keystone of "Collective Bargaining" he erected a structure which kept American production up to the highest point during the war, and which has since served as the basis of the progress of our time.

Another master stroke was his co-operation with ex-President William Howard Taft. The joint chairmen of the War Labor Board were William Howard Taft and Frank P. Walsh. Naturally, Mr. Taft was selected senior chairman. Imagine the condition! A Democratic President and a Democratic administrator, but with a Republican ex-President—yes, President Wilson's opponent—Senior Chairman of the War Labor Board. Furthermore, ex-President Taft went into that Board as a conservative with his sympathies with the employers' group. This was a most difficult situation for Secretary Wilson, a man who not only represented the President and whose affiliations had always been with the Democrats, but whose friends were almost wholly among workers. There

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isn't one man out of a hundred thousand, yea, perhaps out of a million, who could meet this situation with the kindly spirit, the meekness, the helpfulness shown by Secretary Wilson. He gave no orders. He refused to exercise his power as Labor Administrator of the nation. He simply laid the facts before ex-President Taft, and appealed to his heart. The result was that when the armistice was signed ex-President Taft, a Republican and a conservative, issued the following statement concerning "Collective Bargaining":

"Organization of labor has become a recognized institution in all the civilized countries of the world. It has come to stay; it is full of usefulness and is necessary to the laborer. It shows serious defects at times and in some unions. These are an apparent willingness to accept benefits enforced through a fear of lawlessness, a disposition to use duress to compel laborers to join unions, and efforts to limit output and to create a dead level of wages, and thus wipe out the necessary and useful difference in compensation of those who are industrious and skillful and of those who are lazy and do not strive to increase the product of the employer whom they serve. These are evils that as the unions grow in wise and intelligent leadership we may well hope are being minimized.

"Much can be done by employers in anticipating just demands of employees. Workers have had too many instances of holding back of employers until they are forced to do justice. Too many employers seek to justify failure to raise wages by pointing to their welfare work for their employees. This is of a paternal character and impresses the workers with the idea that they are being looked after as wards and not

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treated as men capable of exercising independent discretion as to their welfare. They are apt to give the employees the idea that it is a generous concession they are making out of the goodness of their hearts, and that they are not merely yielding a right for a *quid pro quo* for what they receive.

"The most difficult persons to deal with are the extremists on both sides. On the side of labor there seems to be such suspicion by one leader of another that few are willing to make a just concession, not because they don't recognize its justice, but because if they admit it they are charged with betraying the cause of labor. Thus they furnish to their rivals in leadership among workingmen the opportunity to undermine their standing with their fellows. This often puts the labor side in an indefensible position and offers to its enemies a basis for criticism that might easily be avoided.

"On the other hand, there is among employers the bourbon, the man who never learns anything and never forgets anything; the man who says: 'It is my legal right to manage my business as I choose, to pay such wages as I choose, to agree to such terms of employment as I choose, to exclude from my employment union men, because I don't approve of the tenets of the union, and to maintain a family arrangement of my own. I do fairly by my men; I pay them what I think is right, and they will not complain unless some outside union agent interferes. I run a close non-union shop, and I am happy and propose to continue happy.'

"This man is far behind the progress of our social civilization. He lacks breadth of vision extending

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beyond the confines of his shop. He looks to fear of courts, and injunctions, and police, and militia, as the ordinary and usual instruments for continuing his business peacefully and maintaining his rights. He is like the man who regards the threat of a divorce court as a proper and usual means of continuing domestic happiness. He does not recognize that we have advanced beyond the state in which employers and employees are mere laws unto themselves.

"He does not see that the whole public is interested in industrial peace. He does not see that the employers have certain duties social in their nature that are not defined and are not enforcible in law, but exist just as family duties of care and affection exist. He has not followed the growth of things.

"As long as the system that he insists upon continued, individual laborers were at the mercy of their employers. Whatever they got was a concession. They could not maintain themselves in a contest with their employer, dependent as they were on their daily wage, and independent as he was with accumulated capital. That very unjust situation led to the organization of labor that the employee by massing contributions may maintain himself during an industrial struggle without wages.

"This has come to collective bargaining, which is bargaining by the group system. A group of laborers, knowing their rights and knowing how to maintain them, put themselves on a level with their employers, and the result reached is far nearer a just one than by any before attained. That it may often be unjust goes without saying, but so are all human attempts to reach the right line. Of course those individual la-

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borers who do not see the advantage to them of the group system have a right to stay out and must be protected in so doing. But, whether we will or not, the group system is here to stay, and every statesman and every man interested in public affairs must recognize that it has to be dealt with as a condition, to be favored in such a way as to minimize its abuse and to increase its utility.

"The workingmen of the country, since the war began and the importance of their group action has been emphasized by the requirements of the war, have been given a sense of power in their united action which we must recognize and deal with. Of course they may abuse this power; and if so, they may find that they are not the entire community; but if under level headed leadership they do not push it to an excess, they will be able to do much for their members and indeed for the community at large.

"The junkers and the hunkers on both sides must stand aside and will be set aside if common sense prevails. The danger from bolshevism is far greater than from reaction to the bourbon type of employment. The intelligent, conservative leaders of the labor movement should be encouraged. Their difficulties in dealing with their extreme constituents should be recognized."

Even before Mr. Wilson was elected to Congress, he was often sought by employers as well as by wage earners for conciliation purposes. In some of these cases thousands of men and millions of dollars were involved, while other cases were looked upon as insignificant. Mr. Wilson handled them all with simple

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justice as his guide, allowing neither friendship nor sympathy to lead him astray.

I remember one instance where one of the mines was having a great deal of trouble with boys breaking windows in vacant houses belonging to the company. One boy had been arrested, and the boy's parents appealed to Mr. Wilson to represent them. He accepted, out of the kindness of his heart, and appealed to the company to release the boy.

The attorney for the company suggested that he and Mr. Wilson go out to the boy's house and interview him. This they did, and the boy did not make a very good impression on either of them. On the way home the attorney asked Mr. Wilson what he thought about the case. Mr. Wilson replied:

"I don't think anything about it. The boy broke the window."

W. B. Wilson always stood for the protection of property and the sanctity of contracts. He believed that equality of opportunity and the protection of property must go hand in hand, and that in the long run one cannot exist without the other. He believed in organized labor, and always recommended to employers that they should encourage the organization of their men, and should deal with such organizations; but he also insisted that the men should keep their word. I remember numerous instances, when there had been a slight temptation on the part of some of the workers to go back on their agreement—as in the Seattle Water Front case, for instance—that the Secretary would send this message:

"The average workingman has little else to lose

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than his honor and integrity. When that is gone he is in a sorry plight indeed."

I have never known an instance where employers have been better off by not taking the Secretary's advice. Let me state one of the many cases which came to my personal attention. Some manufacturers came to Secretary Wilson and Mr. Hugh L. Kerwin, Director of the Conciliation Service, and stated that their men were uneasy and demanded an increase. The manufacturers said that they were willing to give the men an increase of ten per cent. and would post a notice to that effect, but would not meet committees of their men. Mr. Kerwin, however, told them that the increase was not the most important matter, but rather that the men wanted to be recognized and consulted. This the manufacturers positively refused to do, saying that their self-respect would not permit them to discuss their business affairs with their employees. Of course, it was the self-respect of the employees which made them desire recognition. Finally, a strike came on and twenty-five hundred men went out. The case went to the War Labor Board, which awarded the men double what they were formerly willing to settle for in the conference with the manufacturers.

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CHAPTER XXI

Wilson Policies

"Sentiment rules the world." On January 22, 1919, Secretary Wilson called together the chiefs of the different bureaus and services into his office. For some time a committee, consisting of the Assistant Secretary, Hon. Louis F. Post, Chairman; Mr. Walter Parker, Vice Chairman; Mr. Grant Hamilton; Miss Mary Van Kleeck, and myself, had been studying plans for the reorganization of the Department of Labor. The actual report had been written by Mr. Parker, and, at the suggestion of the Assistant Secretary, we purchased for him, as a token of appreciation, a set of books. The presentation was made by Secretary Wilson on the morning just referred to.

The Secretary began by saying that money is the controlling factor with a great many men, but that men who have accumulated great wealth are quickly forgotten, and almost no one has won lasting appreciation through the accumulation of money. He then explained how a second group of men are actuated by a desire for power or fame. These men, the Secretary believed, have an advantage over the first group, as certainly they are longer remembered. History shows, however, that such men usually get into trouble sooner or later by attempting to serve too many masters. The Secretary continued:

"My many years' experience in Washington has convinced me that the only men who secure and perma-

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nently retain the love of their countrymen are those who put service before everything else. The men who seek money are always doomed sooner or later; the men who seek power or fame are continually taking chances and running risks of disaster; but those who are actuated by a simple desire to serve are the ones who ultimately win. The paths of such men may be long and tedious. It may be necessary for them to go through sloughs of despond and to climb treacherous heights; but by keeping the one star in mind they ultimately win, and become an honor to their families, to their communities, and to their nation."

The Secretary went on in his interesting and reminiscent manner, explaining the reason for this fact, namely, that the world is really ruled by sentiment rather than by money, or any other factor. It is not so much because the more money a man has the greater target he is; nor because notoriety naturally develops jealousy; but rather because of the controlling motives of life are love, sympathy, understanding, hope. Some quote the old saying: "The higher up in the tree the monkey is, the more stones will be thrown at him." The Secretary believed that jealousy is a factor, but not a great factor. Yet even jealousy is a form of sentiment. What the Secretary meant is that it is the intangible and unseen things rather than the tangible and material things which rule the world.

There are the good sentiments, such as love, sympathy, hope, understanding, but there are also the bad sentiments, such as jealousy and hate. Almost every great movement can be traced to these sentiments. Almost everything we do is done from some such motive. Now, the men who are actuated by service ap-

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peal directly to the emotions of the masses; while the men who are actuated by the desire for wealth, power, or fame appeal to those good motives only indirectly; they most directly appeal to the bad sentiments of a nation.

The Secretary's great success in the settlement of industrial disputes has been due to his recognition and understanding that sentiment rules the world. At conferences which I have attended, where the different representatives perhaps would not speak to one another, the Secretary's words have brought them together in common agreement. The experts representing both employers and wage workers had come armed with tables of figures and volumes of facts. They would lay these papers before the Secretary. He would thank them, but never look at the papers. Moreover, after he began to talk, the lawyers of neither side would refer more than once or twice to the evidence or the figures. The Secretary knew that men are not reached through their heads but through their hearts, that very few people can be convinced by testimony or statistics. He realized that both the employers and the wage workers are actuated, not by facts, but by sentiment. Hence, he would appeal to them all as men, as fathers, as trustees of a community or industry. He would appeal to the sympathy, patriotism, the hope of both sides. He always assumed that both employers and wage workers were honest from their own point of view. He believed in every man and saw only the best in every man. He realized that fundamentally wage workers are not fighting for more wages or shorter hours so much as for recognition, and that this applies not simply to the rec-

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ognition of the Union but to the recognition of the individual.

If only this could be realized by every employer, how much happier and more prosperous this world would be! So many employers say to me: "We have recognized the unions; but the men are still slacking. They are not interested in their work, but only watch the clock. There is no desire on their part to produce and they have no joy in production."

This is true in some localities, but the real reason is that the employers' recognition stopped with simply the formal recognition of the union. The recognition of the union must be followed by a recognition of the individual. Each man must be made to feel that he is important and that the success of the establishment depends on him. And yet the average employer presents just the opposite point of view to his men. He tries to make each man feel that the business could very well get on without him; perhaps from the unconscious feeling that if he praises the man, the man will demand higher wages. When you impress an individual with the idea that he is unimportant, when you permit him to feel that he is not of much value to you, he isn't of much value to you, and every day he becomes of less value. Ambition to produce can be aroused in the individual only by impressing upon him that he is important and valuable and is entitled to recognition. Yes, sentiment rules the world. Human nature in a factory is not different from human nature in politics or human nature in the home. When men are happy they are efficient; when men are unhappy they are inefficient.

The Secretary understands that great fundamental

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truth that the ruling desire on the part of every person is a desire for appreciation. We love most those who most appreciate us. The great military, political, and industrial leaders of the world are men who most appreciate their soldiers, their constituents, and their workers. After a labor leader talked with Secretary Wilson, he left the room with the feeling that the Secretary appreciated him and his work. When an employer left the Secretary, he went away with the feeling that the Secretary appreciated him and his work. Moreover, the Secretary honestly appreciated the work of both because he could see only the good points of both. The result of this was that the Secretary had the confidence of both and both consequently followed him and adopted his decisions.

Our industrial troubles will become less only as both the leaders among employers and wage workers get the Secretary's vision that sentiment rules the world. Both sides must realize that money and hours are but incidents in the fight. We never can gain the love and confidence of children by doing things for them, by increasing their allowances, by giving them pennies and parties. We win their confidence only as we get them to do things for us. We love most those for whom we do most, rather than those who do most for us. The real thing which is being fought over by employers and wage workers is self-respect. The employer feels that he cannot give up for fear of losing his self-respect and prestige; while the wage workers feel that they cannot give up for fear of losing their self-respect. Statistics show that pride is the one greatest cause of labor troubles. In some cases it is the controlling factor with the employers, in other

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cases it is the controlling factor with the wage workers; but in most cases it is the controlling factor on both sides.

A corporation is willing to spend thousands of dollars for information relative to material, is willing to hire experts on questions of law, it will pay huge salaries to men to work in material fields; and yet it is giving virtually no attention to the great controlling motives, that is, the sentiments. Not only is the labor cost, which is wholly controlled by sentiment, the most important thing in the expense account in every business, but sentiment likewise controls the purchase of the goods after they are manufactured. There are a few men who see these points. Secretary Wilson is one of these men.

"When employers," said he, "will give as much thought to studying the sentiments which control life as they give to studying materials, machinery, law, and other factors, then we shall be on the road to industrial peace."

Mr. Wilson has given much thought to the question of government ownership. Most of his associates, both among political leaders and labor leaders, are great believers in government ownership. Resolutions in favor of government ownership honeycomb most labor conventions and labor platforms. Notwithstanding great pressure, however, the Secretary always insisted that government ownership is an experiment. He says:

"Nobody knows whether government ownership will succeed or not. Nobody knows how much of it will succeed or how little. There is no reason why government ownership should not be like everything else

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in the world, subject to abuse as well as use. One thing we do know, namely, that it requires a great deal of overhead expense and management. It seems to require more overhead expense for the Government to carry on operations than for private enterprise. Briefly, I feel that if it is necessary for the well-being of the people that the Government should own and operate any line of business, then it must be done; but only under such conditions and only after much thought."

One day the head of one of the bureaus of the Department of Labor came to Secretary Wilson and said:

"There is a concern near here which has most wretched working conditions and is employing girls from a nearby orphan asylum in a way which deserves your immediate attention. I have talked to them and urged them to complain to the authorities, but they seem content with their lot."

The Secretary sat quietly thinking for some time. It was one of the times when he thinks through his entire sentence to the last word, including the final period, before opening his mouth. The clock on the bookcase could be distinctly heard ticking. Finally the Secretary said:

"My friend, I know those conditions exist. My heart aches as I think of those women in that basement, but if they will not complain there is nothing that we can do. We cannot save people. They only can save themselves. Anything that we could do for them at the present time would be mere wasted effort. People cannot be helped until they reach a stage where they want help. The Bible function of repentance is

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fundamentally and psychologically sound. Only as there is a desire within the heart of men and women for better conditions, only as there is regret and remorse in their hearts for the life they are leading, can outside help be of avail. Even then the real help is not from without but from within. Not only has the Department of Labor enough to do to render help where it is requested; but this is the only kind of aid that can be effectively rendered under any conditions."

Labor's most powerful weapon is the general strike. The radical labor leaders have always talked in favor of a general strike and have often earnestly urged it. A general strike means that everybody stops work—the idea being that no train should run, no street cars and electric lights be furnished, and that even grocers, bakers, and milkmen should refuse to do their daily work. In the minds of many leaders labor should make only just demands, it should insist on these just demands, and enforce them by a general strike.

Mr. Wilson always used his influence against general strikes. The fact that few have occurred in the United States is largely due to his influence. Those that have taken place have been confined wholly to single industries. In discussing this with me one day, Mr. Wilson said:

"I learned my lesson at the time of the general strike among the coal miners. It was agreed that we should all go out together and then should all come back together. We were able to go out together, as we had only ourselves to consult. When, however, we voted to go back together we found that the corporation also had something to say about the going back. The

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strike had disrupted business and caused some concerns to fail. The scarcity of coal had caused some manufacturers to use electricity for power, others to employ natural gas, and others to combine their resources and pool their manufacturing capacity. Striking is something like plowing a field; it can be done in a few hours, but it takes months to get a stand of grass again. Yes, there are many objections to the general strike, but the primary one is that conditions are different when the men are ready to go back from what they were when the strike commenced. These changed conditions make it impossible for the men to go back in the same way or in the same numbers as they left. Many must necessarily be hurt."

Mr. Wilson also understands as few men do the inefficiency and hard feeling which follow a strike, even after the men return to work. He has been very sympathetic with the employers' point of view, knowing as he does that everything ultimately depends upon production. He has often said that a general strike can never be conclusively won by either side. The winner is, in a way, the loser, because the loser is unhappy and dissatisfied. Hence, Mr. Wilson was always a great believer in conciliation. Labor disputes are best settled voluntarily without a strike, or with one so short as not to develop hard feeling. In the latter case no rancor is left in the mind of either party, and both continue work whole-heartedly, endeavoring to increase production to match the increase in wages or reduction of hours. When, however, a strike has occurred, and bad feeling is developed, it makes little difference which side wins; there is never the same efficiency in the plant as there was before.

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One of the greatest strains upon Secretary Wilson came at the time of the threatened general railroad strike in 1916. The country will never know how close it came to a great catastrophe at that time. The nation owes an immense debt of gratitude to President Wilson and Secretary Wilson for their efforts in bringing the men and Congress together. Men who were there will never forget Secretary Wilson's getting the great leaders of the brotherhoods together and saying to them:

"Gentlemen, I know that you can call and force a general strike. You can stop every train, both passenger and freight, and stagnate the entire business of the United States. But let me ask you to consider carefully whether this will gain your ends. Experience has shown me that little is accomplished through force. You have no grievance whatever against the public. Your grievance is against the stockholders and directors of the railroads. Don't you run a great risk in harming a thousand people, or even ten thousand people, for the sake of punishing one stockholder? Certainly, there will be thousands hurt by a general strike to one stockholder whom you punish by such a strike.

"I sympathize with you in your desire to keep your case before the people; but you must treat the people fairly in order to have the case treated on its merits. If you stop the trains, it will be only a few days before New York City will be on the point of starvation, while New England will be without coal. Under such conditions, do you think the people of these sections would consider your case on its merits? No, they certainly would not. Instead of your having the

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sympathy of the people as you have today, you might be mobbed and lynched by them.

"There is another thing which you should remember. If the masses were at the point of starvation, they would not be content to wreak vengeance upon you. Law and order would be pushed aside. The fact of your striking would not eliminate the food. There would still be food, and the masses would take the shortest cut to get this food. This would result in havoc, destruction, and the disruption of industry from which we all would suffer for years. I beg of you to consider this most carefully."

As the result of this talk to these men, and a corresponding talk by the President to the railroad officials, a compromise was reached whereby Congress passed the Adamson Bill, for which the Administration incurred much blame. Let me say, however, that this bill was purely a compromise, and it is only by such compromises that we have progressed or will progress. Compromise is the safety valve of democracy. Conciliation is the safety valve of industrial unrest. Only as both are encouraged will our ship of state safely outride the storms ahead.

"Are you a Socialist?" the Secretary was asked.

"I am now and for all time an evolutionist," was his reply. "I believe in a natural evolution, which will bring about the condition of affairs for which we are all fighting. The breach between labor and capital may never be healed, but we can at least bring about a better understanding of both the employee and the management concerning the obstacles which make that breach possible."

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CHAPTER XXII

What of the Future?

"What is the chief purpose of your life as you see it?" This question was one day put to William B. Wilson.

"Establishing industrial peace," answered the Secretary instantly.

Establishing industrial peace has been the life work of the Secretary. Labor leaders—and he has been a labor leader most of his life—in many quarters are supposed to thrive on turmoil and strikes. But this big, ruddy, earnest miner has always been an advocate of arbitration, adjustment, and peace. Moreover, this attitude has been impressed upon the entire Department of Labor. Any opinions of employers to the contrary are incorrect.

"Industrial peace," he said in explanation of his answer, "is both an economic and a sociological necessity. It is not an idle dream, but a practical possibility. The chief requirement in achieving it is ability on the part of those dealing with issues as they arise to put themselves in the other fellow's place; to view the question from all sides fairly and justly.

"To a degree there is partnership between labor and capital. Their interests are parallel in the matter of securing a maximum production with a minimum effort. Only beyond that point do their interests diverge. Then comes the question of a division

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of the profits, with each side humanly wanting more than the other side is at first willing to concede.

"At the point of divergence the practical, sensible thing is for capital and labor to sit down quietly as business men and argue the thing out. Mutual concessions must be made. It is much easier to secure mutual concessions after discussion when each side has come to understand the point of view of the other side."

Here Secretary Wilson illustrated his point by describing the annual conference held in the bituminous coal mining business. In his long years of work as an officer of the United Mine Workers of America, he stood for this principle of conference and agreement, and now sees it applied to the bituminous coal mining operations in the country.

The plan is simple. It consists merely of assembling together the representatives of the operators and the representatives of the miners, usually at Indianapolis. Some four hundred representatives of operators are present and some ten or twelve hundred representatives of the miners. Their questions of difference are threshed out. The operators explain the difficulties they have encountered, many of which have not been understood or appreciated by the miners heretofore. The miners, likewise, make clear their troubles and necessities. The air is clarified by discussion and mutual understanding. Then agreements are made as to wage scale, conditions of labor and the like, with provisions in the agreements to permit them to be changed to conform with purely local conditions. Contracts are entered into for a

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year or a term of years. Both sides profit by the resulting stability to the industry.

"But, in these conferences, are you not apt to lose sight of the interests of the consuming public?" some one asked.

"No," the Secretary replied. "In the first place, the interest of the consumer, in the larger sense, is always the interest of the producing forces, for the producing forces, taken broadly, are the consuming public. This form of arbitration is the fair and the just way of settling disputes. I am not an advocate of compulsory arbitration, except possibly in connection with railroads and public utilities. In the law creating the Department of Labor no provision was made for compulsory arbitration, and I am inclined to believe Congress was wise. If you compel capital to accept the result of an arbitration, capital might be required to operate at a loss until entirely exhausted. If you compel labor to accept it, there would be created a condition of slavery. Voluntary arbitration contains no such objections, and in the end is most effective. The Department of Labor believes that, unless a contract is satisfactory to both parties, it would be better not to enter into it. Furthermore, the Department of Labor has no sympathy with the old theory advanced in Europe by a school of trade unionists that labor can gain advantage by curtailing production; that is, by setting a low maximum for each worker and not permitting one to go beyond that."

In discussing this once with me, the Secretary said:

"Certainly I am not in sympathy with any such notion. You will find very few intelligent labor men

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who are. The theory of which you speak has no general following in this country. Employer and employee, in the very nature of things, should be mutually interested in getting out the greatest measure of product with the least effort. That is simply common sense. All trade unionists object to men being driven or induced to work beyond their normal capacity, but when greater production can be secured by the same expenditure of labor, there is just that much more available for labor when it comes to negotiating wages and conditions of employment. The policy to which the Department of Labor should always adhere is to do all it can to bring labor and capital together in conferences, so that they may settle their own differences."

No one can talk with Mr. Wilson without being impressed by the exceptional personality of the man. In physical appearance he conveys an idea of quiet strength. He is a big man, big in mind and body. Mentally and physically he is ever alert and active, impressing one as a trained thinker, and absolutely honest. In face and figure Mr. Wilson appeals to the literary imagination as a splendid model for Longfellow's "Village Blacksmith." Perhaps it is the touch of somberness in his countenance that makes one feel the depth and sincerity of the man. Deep thoughtfulness is written in his eyes, together with a mixture of tenderness and humor that is irresistible. There is a certain indescribable look to the man that tells plainly of his honest love for humanity, combined with his knowledge that the problem is very complex and is not easy of solution.

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When receiving callers the Secretary listens intently but does very little talking. He allows his visitors to do all the talking first. Then simply and concisely he says what he has to say. In his way of thinking much and talking very little, he reminds one somewhat of Mr. Rockefeller. He thinks through his sentence—including the period—before opening his mouth.

All his life Secretary Wilson has been a worker. His recreation has been largely in working for others, endeavoring to better labor conditions in the country. Simple of life and tastes, the acquisition of place and power has not changed his natural manner and habits. He still lives simply and sensibly, and the atmosphere of his small farm at Blossburg, Pennsylvania, is fully as attractive to him as the more gay and stately atmosphere of official Washington.

Readers may wonder why I have so intermingled the life of Secretary Wilson and the work of the Department of Labor. Some who have read this manuscript complain that it is incoherent and should confine itself more to one of the two subjects presented. From a literary point of view this doubtless is true, but not from a practical standpoint.

My object is to give manufacturers, merchants, and other employers a correct view of the Department of Labor and its work. This Department is liable to become the most important executive arm of the Federal Government. It is very vital that it should be understood. The policies of the Department of Labor can never be understood except by knowing the man who constructed these policies. Moreover, this will apply to students of labor conditions long years after

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Mr. Wilson has passed away. No employer or wage earner will ever be equipped to understand and successfully to deal with the Department of Labor without a knowledge of William B. Wilson, its first Secretary.

One thing more in closing. In February, 1917, Secretary Wilson submitted to President Wilson a draft of a bill for the adjustment of labor disputes in the transportation system of the country. I believe that if the principle therein involved can be enacted into law, it will prevent most strikes and lockouts by removing the motive, make progress possible without the use of compulsion, and at the same time conserve the property rights and liberties of all persons concerned.

The Secretary always opposed compulsory arbitration because he did not believe that any man or set of men should be *compelled* to work for the profit or convenience of any other man or set of men, but he also recognized that the wage workers should be reasonable in their demands and should not abuse their power.

All progress heretofore made by the wage workers through their collective activities has been brought about by destroying or threatening to destroy the equities of a business. To illustrate: the shorter work day has not been obtained by reducing hours of labor from ten to eight per day in every part of the same industry or occupation at the same time. The object has been attained by grasping the opportunity existing in some locality to compel some particular employer or employers to concede a shorter work-day, and then utilizing the accomplishment as a leverage to

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force similar concessions from other employers. As the competitive equality and power of the employer granting the shorter work-day has been restricted, it has been easier for the wage workers to force other employers into line.

In all systems of labor arbitration the tendency is toward equalization with the highest existing standards for the workers as the ultimate aim. With a continuing system of arbitration, the lowest standards would in time be brought to a level with the highest standards. After reaching that point progress would be extremely slow, because the economic pressure would have to be sufficient to lift the entire load at once instead of lifting it one piece at a time, as is the present practice.

In any system of continuous arbitration, however, the final protection of the wage workers against unfair decisions would be the standard of living, which is flexible and which may be raised or lowered and the workmen still live. The employer, however, would have as his final protection the clean-cut, inflexible line between profit and loss, which he would be able to show definitely from his cost accounts. This would result in a system of continuous arbitration giving a greater measure of protection to the employers than to the employees.

Although compulsory arbitration involves a serious question of human liberty, which no majority should have the right to invade, yet wise labor leaders realize that, if people should be cut off from their food supply and confronted with starvation, they would not stop to consider whose rights are invaded or whose liberty is destroyed. These people would find some

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means of securing food. They would take the most direct road, whether that happened to be the right way or the wrong way. For that reason, it seems the part of wisdom to work out carefully the problem when no crisis exists, with a view to conserving both the freedom of the workers and the food supply of the people.

Secretary Wilson proposed to create a system by which nothing could be gained by striking. He would remove for a certain period all temptation to strike. The worker would be left free to work or not work, individually or collectively, and the employer would be free to dismiss his workmen individually or collectively, but the motive for strikes and lockouts would be destroyed. With a measure of this character on the statute books, strikes and lockouts should never occur at any one time over an area sufficiently large to impair seriously the industries of the country. The end would be reached not by crushing the workers, but by giving them a different method of adjusting grievances.

Let us take the transportation industry as an illustration. It is presumed that, if Congress has the power to create a Commission to regulate rates, so long as they are not confiscatory, it would have the same power to create a Commission to regulate any of the component parts of rates, such as wages. The further thought follows that the cost of any of the component parts of rates cannot be confiscatory. Thus such a Wage Commission could not establish a confiscatory wage.

When the Interstate Commerce Commission fixes a rate that is not confiscatory, the law gives it all the

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force and effect of a contract between the shipper and the transportation company without there having been an actual meeting of minds between them. This principle the Secretary utilized in preparing his plan. In brief, it would provide a fixed wage for a certain period, with the employer liable to civil suit in case he should deviate from it one way or the other.

The proposed Wage Commission would be composed of an equal number of representatives of employers, employees, and the Government. This Wage Commission should not be given full judicial powers nor would the Commissioners be appointed for life. It is deemed essential that the opportunity should exist for change at stated periods if changing economic thought, the development of bias on the part of any of the Commissioners, or any other reason should make a change desirable.

When the Interstate Commerce Commission fixes a rate which is not confiscatory, and which is based on substantial evidence taken at hearings, the rate fixed is made to apply, not to any particular shipper, but to any and all shippers. When the rate is fixed it cannot be raised to one shipper and lowered to another. The same principle is introduced into this Wilson plan in its application to wages. Although means would be provided by which errors of law, apparent on the face of the record, could be determined by the courts, yet all employers in a given locality and given industry would be treated alike.

It is believed that by making it impossible for the wage rate to be raised or lowered within the period for which the award would be made, the principal cause of strikes and lockouts would be eliminated.

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Although the wage earners would then be left free to strike and the transportation companies would be free to use the lockout, *nothing could be gained by either side. Consequently neither strike nor lockout would occur.* If the employer knew that he could be sued by his wage workers in case he paid them less than the fixed wage, and the wage workers knew that he would be sued by the District Attorney if he paid more than the fixed wage, all incentive to striking would be removed. The only requisite to insure the success of such a plan would be to have enough intelligent Wage Commissioners and to have them change the rate of wage often enough to protect both the industry and the wage workers. *The chief purpose of such a board would be to have the rate of wage as nearly as possible that which would be the natural wage if left to the law of supply and demand, and to have it apply to all employers (in a given community and industry) alike, making them liable to suit for deviating from it in either direction.*

The Wage Commission could be given thirty days in which to file its decisions with the courts and ten days thereafter could be allowed for filing exemptions; but as the order of the Wage Commissioners would go into effect on the date fixed by the Commission (unless the courts reversed the action of the Commission on errors of law apparent on the face of the record), the length of time allowed for filing the order and taking exceptions thereto would not be of grave importance.

The employer always controls the fund from which wages are paid. Hence, under such a plan there would be no way by which the employee could compel him

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to pay more than such a Wage Commission might award. He might, however, pay less; but the employee would then be able to sue and recover. If he must enter the suit at his own expense, the employee would be placed at a decided disadvantage in the enforcement of the award. It is, therefore, deemed equitable to require the United States Attorneys to prosecute the suit in his behalf. By the same law, however, the United States Attorneys would be directed to institute and prosecute proceedings to prevent employers from paying more than the award, so that a strike to force higher wages than the award would be valueless.

The awards would be made for a definite period, but sufficiently short to make it useless for either employer or employee to tie up operations pending the expiration of the award. An opportunity should be given for a periodical radical readjusting on a basis of changed conditions or advance in economic thought. Provision should also be made for readjustment within the period in the event of an emergency. The need of the hour is increased production. This can be secured only by making the wage worker happy and interested in producing all possible. This means that he must always feel right toward the employer and the system of wage adjustment in force.

In the minds of many of the ablest captains of industry and leaders of labor, this is the most hopeful solution of wage controversies yet suggested. Although the Secretary outlined it as applicable to transportation and public utilities, why could it not be applied to general industry as well? I believe that it could be and will be.

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PLAN FOR LABOR ADJUSTMENT.

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As a step in this direction, Secretary Wilson submitted the following memoranda to the Industrial Conference in October, 1919:

"There shall be created a Board of equal numbers of employers and employees in each of the principal industries and a Board to deal with miscellaneous industries not having separate Boards. The representatives of labor on such Boards shall be selected in such manner as the workmen in the industry may determine. The representatives of the employers shall be selected in such manner as the employers in the industry may determine.

"Whenever any dispute arises in any plant or series of plants that cannot be adjusted locally the question or questions in dispute shall be referred to the Board created for that industry for adjustment. The Board shall also take jurisdiction whenever in the judgment of one-half of its members a strike or lockout is imminent. Decisions of the Board on questions of wages, hours of labor, or working conditions must be arrived at by unanimous vote. If the Board shall fail to come to a unanimous determination of any such question, the question in dispute shall be referred to a General Board appointed by the President of the United States in the following manner:

"One-third of the number to be appointed in agreement with the organization or organizations of employers most representative of employers; one-third of the number to be appointed in agreement with the organization or organizations of labor most representative of labor; one-third of the number to be appointed by the President direct.

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"Any question in dispute submitted to the General Board for adjudication shall be decided by the unanimous vote of the Board. If the General Board fails to arrive at a decision by unanimous vote the question or questions at issue shall be submitted to an umpire for determination. The umpire shall be selected by one of the two following processes: First, by unanimous selection of the General Board. Failing of such selection, then the umpire shall be drawn by lot from a standing list of twenty persons named by the President of the United States as competent umpires in labor disputes.

"In all disputes that may be pending locally, or before the Industrial Board, or before the General Board, or before the umpire the employers and employees shall each have the right to select counsel of their own choice to represent them in presenting the matter in controversy.

"Whenever an agreement is reached locally, or by the unanimous vote of the Industrial Board, or by the unanimous vote of the General Board, or by the decision of the umpire the conclusion arrived at shall have all the force and effect of a trade agreement which employers and employees shall be morally bound to accept and abide by.

"It is understood that this plan would not interfere with any system of joint wage conferences now in existence unless or until the failure to agree in such a conference made a strike or lockout imminent."

Men who wish to anticipate the future should most carefully study and digest the plan above outlined. It is not Utopian and is not the ultimate; but it should serve for some time to come. Certainly we cannot

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long continue following the present uneconomic methods of readjustment.

As I look back over Secretary Wilson's life and then forward into the years ahead, it seems as if he served as Secretary of Labor at the most critical period in the nation's history. Not only was the country involved in the greatest war of history, but the labor problem was and is still passing from a stage where it was but an incident to a place of prime importance.

During Secretary Wilson's life the struggle was for union recognition and the right to organize. Although this was once most bitterly fought by employers, it is today accepted as right and natural. It is now generally agreed by all thinking people that both labor and capital have a right to combine and deal collectively with one another. Nevertheless, the struggle between "him who hath" and "him who hath not" will still rage. It has always existed since the days of Cain and Abel, and will continue in the thousands of years to come. The labor problem may never be solved as long as wood floats and stone sinks, although it will show itself in different ways at different times.

The writer feels that the next phase of the struggle will be over the question of government ownership. As labor secures recognition of its right to combine, it then seeks a hand in the management. Being unable to supply the capital, it naturally turns to government ownership. In seeking government ownership, labor feels that it can control the management through the unions and secure its capital through the Government. The time is not ripe for a discussion of this question, and it has no part in the purpose of this

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volume. The subject, however, should not be dropped, nor this chapter ended, without quoting a statement of Secretary Wilson's on government ownership. It is as follows:

"The Government should engage only in such activities and pass such laws as are necessary to give the individual the fullest opportunity for self-determination. To the extent that government ownership can give man more freedom of expression, to that extent government ownership should be encouraged; but when government ownership tends to repress individual initiative and development, it loses its effectiveness."

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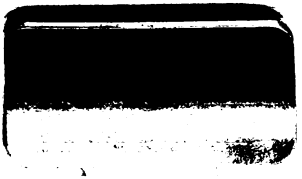

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